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The
COMMONWEAL
A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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Week by Week

THE ADMINISTRATION recovery program has been convincingly separated by both friendly and unfriendly critics into two sections.

Pump Priming

The direct pump priming section provides for a continuance of basic relief at the present levels and for additional spending of about $1,500,000,000. The other part is designed to make credit an easier thing to get, through the banks and through the RFC. The relief and PWA distributions are supposed to stimulate private business to greater immediate production and employment and to a greater desire for credit to expand production still further. Then its want will be easily satisfied. Experience and logic prove that those public distributions are likely to fail in themselves to stimulate private business sufficiently to make it want to, or able to, raise production enough to clear the unemployment rolls or thoroughly exploit the country's vast reservoirs of credit. The most conservative critics simply assume that the only way out is for the government and all the people to do everything possible to encourage private industry to forge ahead in production, that is, make proprietors absolutely confident that they can pursue their business policies and profits with the minimum of objection and worry. But experience shows that course to be self-defeating: such policies as we know them embody contradictions that defeat the prosperity they seek. Such a course also involves the sacrifice of things more important than profitable laissez-faire business. More helpful critics specify certain measures that could supplement public spending in making the prospect for private business more hopeful and thus breed business "confidence" and expansion. These measures, such as a new and settled policy for the railroads and utilities, changes in the tax laws, and revision of labor laws and policies, ought certainly to be disposed of in as final form as possible.

THE CRITERION in judging these specific measures, however, ought not be the profitableness of private business—not any more so than their usefulness in bringing on the revolution or keeping a particular party in power. Private business and government activity and intermediate social action must all be limited and expanded and changed in character in the effort to see that individuals and families have an opportunity to work at socially useful and sufficiently rewarding occupations. It is vain to expect that the pattern of such a social good would show American productive and governmental institutions the same as they were before 1929. To the extent that "pump priming" is useful production done under decent conditions, the need is not only that pump priming should be made to fit business: business must also be modified to fit that useful production.

ONE HAPPY and immediate result of the signing of the Anglo-Italian agreement is the stymie laid Representative Byron N. Scott's proposal of boycotting Germany, Italy and Japan. The scheme of the California congressman, who is said also to be an ardent super-navy man, is quite complex. It would entail a joint congressional resolution signed by the President, a conference of the signatories of broken treaties to be called by the President for the purpose of laying an international boycott and finally a repeal of the Neutrality Act to permit the United States to aid the victims of aggression. The partizanship of the proposal is partly indicated by the naming of the three aggressive members of the Rome-Berlin axis without including any of the other powers in various parts of the world guilty of treaty violation in recent

Boycotting the Wicked Nations

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years. Aside from this and the tremendous economic dislocation that would result from the completion of so fantastic a program, the embodiment of the principle of separating the good nations from the bad nations, the "democracies" from the "dictatorships," for instance, cannot be too roundly condemned. Nations are by turns aggressive or defensive; their actions are at times bad, at times constructive. The assumption of this arbitrary attitude, which is far too common in various Leftist and Rightist pressure groups in this country and elsewhere, makes a viable solution of international problems almost unattainable. It does away with the honest appraisal of evidence, the respect for one's fellow men of differing opinions, and the possibility of general collaboration, without which there can be no lasting adjustments. It fosters personal contempt and hatred and breeds international ill-will. The apparatus for collective action in specific instances so badly needed in this torn and disordered world, will never be built up by methods such as these.

American Neighbors

A MARGIN of discount may justly be allowed to anyone approaching a public oration prepared for a special occasion. Thus, analysis of the President's Pan-American Day speech reveals a good many of the phrases one would expect to find. We think, however, that it would be a mistake either to suspect the President's sincerity or to dismiss the objective worth of the phrases themselves on this account. In nothing has Mr. Roosevelt shown himself more truly a leader than in the freshness of his approach to the not wholly fortunate subject of Pan-American relations, and his intuitive faith in the positive rather than the negative aspect of those relations. There is a simple logic of circumstance in our all being on one hemisphere together which outweighs, or should outweigh, various differences of history and tradition. To have grasped this promising truth, and to have begun building upon it with resolute good-will and tactful good manners—perhaps an equally necessary ingredient in a situation in which heretofore our reputation for manners has been none of the best—has been one of the administration's achievements. Mr. Roosevelt has every right to his phrases. But they are not merely "his phrases": they go beyond this, as we have said. To speak of "substituting the rule of justice and law for the rule of force," of "generously interpreting and faithfully observing the sanctity of the pledged word"; of realistically admitting problems and differences—"the same material for controversy which exists everywhere" —and of yet "solving these normal human differences by maintaining peace"; finally, of having necessarily to observe an inherited duty of active sacrifice in upholding our ideals—to speak thus is to say what the world most needs to hear.

Building Homes for America

AN ALTOGETHER admirable pamphlet has just been issued by the Public Affairs Committee entitled "Can America Build Houses?" Not only will this leaflet interest those who are concerned with the general problems of housing: it should be carefully digested by any individual who is contemplating acquiring a house. Naturally the problems of this most complex subject cannot possibly be solved in a thirty-page booklet; and its author, Miles L. Colean, is perhaps a little too much impressed with the analogy between producing automobiles and producing houses—at best a dubious analogy, since it rests upon the assumption that the methods of mass production and organization can with equal success be applied to both cases.

THIS analogy has been implicit in most contemporary thought on the subject of housing. The American Institute of Architects' Housing Committee in a recent report says: "Housing is in direct competition with the automobile, the radio and all other improvements which have been invented or sold to the American public by advertising." At the architects' convention to which this report was submitted, the goal of the Housing Committee was declared to be 2,000,000 homes costing about $2,500 each. This goal and declared price-level, which is intended to be within the means of a family having an annual income of about $1,500, obviously rests upon the assumption of the automobile-house analogy, since anyone familiar with building costs under present building practise knows that for this sum one can, in the temperate regions of the United States, build nothing adequate for decent family life. Therefore what such authorities as Mr. Colean and the architects have in mind is a "production" house, with a relatively high replacement rate, just like cars or radios or ice boxes, and an equivalently short-term financing program. Would such a house be acceptable to those who must use it? Would it not tend to increase slum areas by greatly accelerating the rate of building obsolescence? Would it not make even uglier a landscape already sufficiently marred by the junk heap, that septic tank of industrialism? There is another line of housing development which is today almost entirely left out of consideration, the line which conceives a house as a distinctly long-term investment rather than an article of consumption. Such an approach to the problem would attempt by every means available to improve the lasting elements in house construction, would wage relentless warfare against jerry-building, whether by speculators on the site or by industrialists in fac-

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IN ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

"GET THEM!"

tories, and would thus make possible, because of greater investment security, far longer term financing at low interest rates than has yet been contemplated in this country. Such an approach, by making available in each case a greater initial investment, might provide homes better suited to a full, human family life.

Labor Action

IF THE order of labor news had been reversed recently, its importance would have been more impressed on newspaper readers. The meeting of the thirty-eight C.I.O. unions in Washington and the decision made there to broaden the direction of the C.I.O. and hold a constitutional convention in September or October for the purpose of putting the organization of the industrial unions on a permanent basis completely paralleling the A.F.L. was so undramatic as it occurred that it received less notice than it deserved, and less than it would have received if the Flint strike had come before instead of afterwards. The C.I.O. has proved its ability to function during a period of rising prosperity and now it is meeting a depression. The General Motors strike indicates that the depression is hitting it seriously. Dues are not being paid with the regularity that provides defensive and offensive strength. The General Motors strike and the other movements of labor across the country, as well as the Washington conference, show that the unions do not intend to resign the position they so recently struggled to attain. Unless union labor is active enough now to enforce very great respect indeed, labor is in a position to be treated with sharply decreasing concern.

CONTRACTS are coming up for renewal and labor has not recently shown its power. Labor has not done well at the polls this year and the

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political position of the C.I.O. in the important state of Pennsylvania may take a fall in the May primaries. In Washington too many proposals are made to "solve" the problems of the recession by sacrificing wage rates and by cutting relief and by permitting greater and greater labor displacement. If the unions revive the wages and hours bill, which they propose to do, they will do so almost single-handed. As long as we are all so insistent on our own extreme theoretical rights —with labor concentrating more on hourly rates than yearly income, on jurisdictional control rather than economic rationalization, on the immediate technological displacement instead of debilitating waste, on the pay envelope and not economic responsibility; and with business concentrating on low costs and high prices instead of a healthy market, on high profits and not a high general productive level—the dialectical process of getting things accomplished requires a strong and militant labor movement to counteract the extreme conservatives and bring a compromise that will permit the country to go along.

Cooperative Milk in New York

THE EXCESSIVE spread between rates paid the farmer and prices charged the consumer has been subject to many an attack in recent years. Indignant charges against the New York "milk trust" have been met by equally forceful expressions of righteous self-defense and a wholesale barrage of statistics. The Milk Consumers Protective Committee, formed in September, 1936, has completed its plans of meeting this impasse by actually enabling the city's families to secure milk at lower rates. And the means of doing so is not any creature of the state, but a self-sustaining consumers' cooperative. Ten thousand members at $.25 a head are needed to start and the membership drive is well under way. The Consumer-Farmer Milk Cooperative has already made a contract with a modern pasteurization plant with a capacity of 100,000 bottles a day. Milk in a new type of paper container will be distributed through stores at $.09 a quart, the lowest prevailing market rate and a penny or two below the price of well-known brands of grade-B milk. Everything is to be done by union labor. Members will receive dividends in proportion to their purchases from two-thirds of the profits; the farmers, who pay the transportation charges, will receive the other third of the net earnings. If the enterprise is successful it will also demonstrate the fallacy of consigning consumer cooperation to the simpler or more homogeneous lands of Nova Scotia, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, England, Scotland and rural America. The steady growth of the cooperative movement in the United States is undeniable, and the actual establishment of such a promising producer-consumer partnership in New York is welcome news.

The Meaning of Meaning

ONE ADVANTAGE at least may be reaped from the recent vogue for what is a trifle loosely called "semantics." It affords an excuse for defining, for making more precise, the concepts which we have in mind when we use such words as "capitalism," "social justice," "profits." It is such a task which Father Michel undertakes in "What Is Capitalism?" Inevitably the making of any careful analysis of meaning leads to the making of formative distinctions, leads to definitions which are tendentious rather than purely descriptive. Thus in Father Michel's analysis there is implicit a suggested method of solution of the very social problems which have made common the use of the word "capitalism." Peter Maurin is a working man who, after many years of living in the very heart of these problems, saw a way out of them and became vocal about it. Already the *Catholic Worker* has made its impress, and it is time to know something of the man whose program has supplied the basis for the paper's action. The first national Conference on Catholic Social Action, which is to be held early in May in Milwaukee, indicates official Catholic solicitude over the new society which is to develop out of that in which we are living. Bishop O'Hara of Great Falls, Montana, suggests the cadre in which a Christian social order should be framed.

Between War and Peace

CHAMBERLAIN'S undogmatic and unsentimental *Realpolitik* has excited passionate criticism, in England as well as in this country, but it has, as a matter of fact, helped to diminish the danger of a new world war. London and Rome have succeeded in effecting a compromise which maintains the prestige of both empires, stops the dangerous tensions along the "lifeline" of Great Britain from Gibraltar to Aden and in this way sets free the English navy and English political activity to become a powerful influence in settling the Pacific problems. And this certainly is more substantial than the immediate things "collective security" was able to offer. Friends of international solidarity may deplore its weakness, but the statesman of a great nation is not allowed to wait for the fulfilment of such possibilities; he has to do the best for his country "here and now."

Just at the moment when Franco reaches the Mediterranean and breaks the territory of the so-called Loyalist régime into two parts, Italy solemnly promises to keep hands off Spanish territory, both in Europe and Africa. Italy also con-

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sents to withdraw all her men from Spain, leaving Italian equipment paid for by Franco. Now London may breathe again, after having been frightened seriously by the possibility of Italy's settling down in Morocco or the Balearic Islands. With good relations with Franco and peace in Spain, London will again enjoy her historical influence at the entrance to the Mediterranean. To avoid further tension, Britain and Italy are willing to avoid increasing Mediterranean and Red Sea bases and both reaffirm that the Suez Canal will be open to all ships in peace or war.

Mussolini's restoration of the Roman Empire as the crowning touch to the conquest of Ethiopia, formerly called in London "a ridiculous parody of our empire," will now find official recognition after Britain's influence has been used to make the League withdraw its objections to the annexation of Ethiopia.

But Italy will have to pay for this recognition of its new "empire." Rome is obliged to reduce by half the Lybian garrison, which has been called a threat to British influence in Egypt. Besides this, Italy answers the legalization of her Ethiopian conquest with the legalization of British claims along the south coast of Arabia. This is a rather important matter, mostly overlooked by American commentators on the treaty. On the occasion of the so-called introduction of self-government to India, Aden and its small "hinterland," administered hitherto from Delhi, was blessed with the new status of a British crown colony. This "administrative reorganization" was used to add with one dash of the pen the whole coast between Yemen and Omer to the British territory.

The strategical importance of this Arabian land opposite British Somaliland is evident; the British claims to this part of Arabia, based on pretended old treaties with the sheiks, have been questioned by Italian publicists. At the same time when England tried to organize a collective quarantine to hinder Italy's annexation of Ethiopia, she herself annexed quietly and without molestation about 100,000 square miles of Arabian territory. Now both empires will stop criticizing each other's annexations. Besides this, London and Rome guarantee the status quo of the "autonomous Arabian kingdoms" and will seek a friendly compromise on Ethiopia's frontiers with Kenya, the Sudan and Somaliland.

This peaceful settlement of all the exasperating controversies extending from Spain to Arabia relieves both London and Rome of the impending danger of an armed conflict. But both sides like to look upon their compromise not as an isolated treaty but as the beginning of a new consolidation of Western Europe, in which France and Germany should be included—a four-power pact, which would mean a renewal of the Locarno agreement. Germany, which likes to have free action in the East but security in the West, will certainly like this arrangement as much as Italy, which returns to the old combination with quite another status.

It is France which hitherto has been most sceptical about a new Locarno. It was the weakness of her Leftist governments that they were unable to produce a unanimous public opinion and clear political decisions on foreign politics. Just as Roosevelt and Hull one day want a quarantine of aggressors and the next strict American neutrality, Blum and Chautemps were relying first on the Russian alliance and were sympathizing with the Spanish Leftists, and then were basing their policy on solidarity with Great Britain and strict non-intervention. Of all vices of statesmen indecision is the most disastrous. France has lost international prestige and real influence by the irresolution of her leading politicians. It gave Italy and Germany the chance to help toward a Franco victory. It gave Germany the opportunity to realize the Anschluss, blocked for two decades by France's active policy in Eastern Europe. The states of the Little Entente judged the influence of the Quai d'Orsay so considerably weakened that they believed themselves unprotected against Berlin's push to the East and one after the other decided to compromise with Germany.

Also in internal matters the government of the Front Populaire has been out of luck. Its social reforms did not bring consolidation but perpetual unrest. The parliamentary apparatus was very capable of multiplying obstructions but unable to produce a sound policy for preventing international isolation. With Hitler's power growing, the Little Entente deserting, and Leftist Spain not far from collapse, France needed political concentration and quick action. Under the circumstances an overwhelming parliamentary majority decided to give to the Daladier Cabinet dictatorial powers for three months.

That the French Republic, the country which has been the champion of European democracy, suspends democratic principles to grant dictatorial powers to the government is a very serious symptom. It demonstrates how dubiously democratic methods are now viewed even by their own followers, in this European crisis, which calls for swift decisions. Of course three months is a short interval and M. Daladier is neither Communist nor Fascist but a liberal man favoring a middle way, but so was Bruening in Germany. No doubt the Daladier Cabinet will bring France a sounder foreign policy and concentrate France's inner strength—but will it be inclined to restore full democracy after three months or to attempt to continue the more comfortable way of decrees? The friends of democracy will watch this development with concern.

C. O. CLEVELAND.

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What Is Capitalism?

By VIRGIL MICHEL

EVERYONE is aware today of the momentous turning-point in human history that is upon us. Christians in particular are keenly aware of the gigantic forces tending to crush out all Christianity, but they are also conscious of the many beginnings of a new life in Christ that is germinating among non-Catholic Christians as well as among Catholics. But are there not many Catholics among us today who would balk at the statement that the whole capitalistic system is doomed, and that it must go if there is to be anything like a Catholic revival? Capitalism is finished! Can any intelligent person doubt it? But whether the sequel to capitalism will be Christian or unchristian is not so evident. That depends greatly on the Christians themselves.

Unfortunately many Catholics have in this regard been content to accept the dichotomy set up by Socialists and Communists for several generations; they have accepted the exclusiveness of the alternatives of "capitalism or communism." Today the phrasing of this has been changed to "fascism or communism." This exclusiveness comes from the narrow range and vision of the communist tradition, which arose out of the eighteenth-century naturalistic optimism regarding the good man of pure nature and the industrial conditions of the first half of the nineteenth century. The whole of Marxism is thus dated and restricted; hence its total lack of a healthy imagination. When Christians have no more vision than their Marxian opponents, they confine their activities to a conscious combat against Marxism. Unconsciously they also accept the above Marxian dichotomy, and so their action is in reality a defense of capitalism. Much more than that, in fact. In a recent issue of the *Catholic World* (February, 1938) a writer goes so far as to call Christ "the first preacher of capitalism as the most workable thesis for society." What unconscious blasphemy! As if there were anything really Christian about our modern capitalism!

The open repudiation of capitalism must sound shocking to such well-intentioned Christians even as the above quotation does to me. But the truth or falsity of either cannot be decided by the emotional reaction it awakens. It can be decided only by what present-day capitalism really is. Unless that is determined there will be much nonsense talked by those who identify it either with private property or with technological mass production.

Hence the question: What is, or what is meant by, capitalism? How can we find out? Not by uncritically taking our accepted notions for granted. Not by uncritically accepting the emotional street-corner exposition or the facile office-desk definition of it. To find out what is really meant and should be meant by capitalism, there is only one justifiable recourse—to the standard works of reference and the writings of accepted authorities or students of modern civilization. And for the Catholic such recourse will be the more convincing the more it is confined to Catholic and Christian works and writers. Whether this should be so or not, could be doubted under general circumstances. But in this instance it is justified by the fact that the very word, "capitalism," and the first critical studies of the thing meant by it, were undertaken by socialists and communists, the avowed enemies of this capitalism as well as of Catholicism, and not without a strong emotional bias in regard to both. In the following paragraphs I shall confine myself to neutral or to avowedly Christian sources.

Glancing at the new fourteenth edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" we read that capitalism is "the world-wide modern system of organizing production and trade by private enterprise free to seek profit and fortune by employing for wages the mass of human labor." This statement is at once followed by the words, "There is no satisfactory definition of the term, though nothing is more evident than the thing," and we are given the following clew to a better understanding of this "thing": "The economics of capitalism are so deeply involved with politics and all sociology that it was regarded until lately as a subject unfitted for scientific treatment." In other words, capitalism is not an abstract system of economics unrelated to other aspects of life. On this all authorities agree.

Taking another and very excellent work of reference, the "Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences," we note that the article on capitalism is written by Werner Sombart, an accepted first-rate student of socio-economic conditions, who started off as a socialist and ended by being a bourgeois. He defines an economic system in general as "a unitary mode of providing material wants, animated by a definite spirit, regulated and organized according to a definite plan and applying a definite technical knowledge." Sombart goes on to define the "spirit of the capitalist system" under the three ideas of acquisition, competition, rationality. The acquisition, he says, is "in terms of money," and it is "the exact opposite of the idea of earning a livelihood which dominated all pre-capitalistic systems." These pre-

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capitalistic systems centered about the human being, while in the capitalist system the "increase of possessions is basic to all economic activity." Evidently this is a point about which much nonsense is bandied to and fro in our day. How easy to insist on the inevitability of the profit motive, when the opposite is taken to mean personal work without any personal gain. The distinction between the above systems is between gain for livelihood or for decent living and living for profit or for unlimited gain. Historically both of these motives or ends may have existed in some degree at all times; but in the capitalist society profit as such is the accepted and dominant ideal of human life, while in the pre-capitalist society decent livelihood was the dominant ideal.

From Sombart and from the above neutral works of reference it is but natural to go on to the splendid German Catholic encyclopedia, "Der Grosse Herder," a scholarly and up-to-date achievement, of which Catholics may be justly proud. "All the world agrees," says the article on *Kapitalismus,* "that from the economic side our whole life is determined in a high degree, yes, in an inordinate degree, by the powers or interests of capital. But if we go deeper than that, many divergencies and variations of meaning turn up."

The article then refers to Sombart, stating that his definition of capitalism has penetrated deeply also among Christian circles although his *Weltanschauung* is quite different from the Christian. The spirit of capitalism as defined by Sombart, it continues, is antithetical to Christianity; it is really "mammonism" and as such is not confined to capitalists, i.e., to the actual possessors of capital.

Here a most important point is touched upon. It is none other than the fact that the virus of the capitalistic spirit is not confined to the large finance capitalists. It has in fact permeated not only the ranks also of the petty bourgeoisie, the small owners, but likewise the workingmen (an important point to keep in mind) and finally our new fixed estate, the relief dependents. But this only means that in a most significant sense we must all say our *mea culpa* to the social poison of capitalism instead of emotionally ranting against the fortunate few whom we may only be envying. There may be much personal guilt in some of them for the evident injustices and oppressions of capitalism, but beyond this fact lies the greater one that there is a system upon us of which all of us from bottom to top are in some degree the spiritual victims, if not adherents.

"Der Grosse Herder" then defines capitalism as an economic order orientated toward the manipulation and increase of capital. It asks the question: If an economy is directed to greater profit as its goal, can it satisfy human wants and needs? And it answers: An unrestricted pursuit of profit fails to attain the end or purpose of economics. Finally, the article speaks of the papal conception of capitalism, i. e., capitalism viewed in its social aspects of wealth concentrated in the hands of a few and of a vast propertyless proletariat. This, according to the Pope, must be superseded by a corporative order. If and when that is attained, "capitalism" in this sense will certainly be at an end.

All the accepted non-communistic authorities agree with the general ideas above in considering the essence of capitalism to be the unrestricted acquisition or accumulation of material wealth, to which all other relations and considerations are subservient. Is it surprising that capitalism is for them something quite unchristian?

One of the most purely economic definitions I have found among Catholic writers is that of Paul Jostock ("Der Ausgang des Kapitalismus," page 6) who leans professedly upon Goetz Briefs. He considers "the ideal type of capitalistic economy" to be characterized by three points: (1) economic activity entered upon for the purpose of acquisition by means of exchange; (2) production through collaboration of two groups, of which one owns the requisite goods and materials purchasable by money, and the other only its own personal energies; (3) the possibility of either group making the other subservient to its own interests being in fact always decided in favor of the capitalists.

Tawney in his famous "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" gives his definition for the purpose of emphasizing that something of the capitalistic spirit prevailed at all times. Yet his twofold conception reveals the underlying attitude of his whole book: "If capitalism means the direction of industry by the owners of capital for their own pecuniary gain, and the social relationships which establish themselves between them and the wage-earning proletariat whom they control, then capitalism had existed on a grand scale both in medieval Italy and in medieval Flanders. If by capitalist spirit is meant the temper which is prepared to sacrifice all moral scruples to the pursuit of profit, it had been only too familiar to the saints and sages of the Middle Ages" (page 84).

It was familiar to the saints, indeed, and how they did react to it! Modern capitalism did have its origin in the late medieval towns, such as those mentioned by Tawney, and it developed from the commercial capitalism of that time through the stage of industrial capitalism to its culmination in our present finance capitalism.

Weber, a most sincere Calvinist, in "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," defines capitalistic action as "adapted to the systematic utilization of goods or personal services as a means of acquisition" in such a way that the accumulated capital is increased (page 18). The Catholic, O'Brien, in his standard work, "An Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reforma-

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tion," holds the same view. Neither avarice, nor large-scale industry, nor absentee ownership is the characteristic mark of modern capitalism, he says. "Probably the most characteristic feature" of the new capitalistic spirit is "that the accumulation of wealth is looked on as a good in itself . . . is regarded as a motive to be pursued for its own sake" (pages 72-73).

Finally, a recent Catholic book, Fanfani's "Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism," mentions three characteristics of the capitalistic spirit: (1) the primary one is "the unlimited use of all means of acquiring wealth that are held to be morally lawful and economically useful" (page 25); (2) the pre-capitalist "considers that appraisements of value in the economic sphere should be governed by moral criteria" while the capitalist "would make the economic criterion the sole norm of such appraisements" (page 26); (3) "the individualistic and utilitarian use of wealth, and this becomes an unlimited enjoyment of wealth; hence an added urge to the unlimited acquisition of wealth" (page 28).

Hilaire Belloc, whose views on capitalism are well known, recently repeated his definition of capitalism as follows: "We mean by capitalism a system under which wealth is produced by a mass of citizens, politically free, but dispossessed, and these working for the profit of a far smaller number of effective owners and controllers of the means of production" (*G. K.'s Weekly,* December 2, 1937, page 212).

Incidentally a still more recent issue of *G. K.'s* mentions an instance that had just occurred in England as but further evidence of the bankruptcy of the whole capitalistic system: "The Chancellor of the Exchequer is reported to have said: 'For a generation past successive Parliaments have been building up a vast structure of social services by which the means of the wage-earners are supplemented. They are assisted in regard to education, health, housing, and through our system of direct taxation a large part of the cost is met from the resources of the well-to-do, including the profits of industrialists and traders.'"

To this news item *G. K.'s* makes the following editorial comment: "The Chancellor's words make it plain that the means of the wage-earners have to be supplemented from outside: in other words that the system is insolvent" (issue of January 20, 1938, page 321). A similar most important point was made in our country by Mr. F. P. Kenkel of the Central Bureau of the Central Verein, who pointed out when our social security legislation was passed that this was the first public acknowledgment on the part of the government and the applauding public that the prevalent system of economic life had failed completely.

The handwriting has been on the wall for a long time, and the writing says that capitalism, the capitalistic system or civilization, is doomed to extinction. Not long ago (September, 1937) the *American Journal of Sociology* reprinted an address delivered at the Chicago Theological Seminary on "Protestantism in the Present World-Situation," the chief point of which is that traditional Protestantism "can continue to exist only if it succeeds in undergoing a fundamental change," a change that will destroy it as Protestantism. Regardless of whether this is true or not, it gives us a good cue as to the real situation of present capitalism: Capitalism is so doomed to extinction that it can continue to exist only in so far as it ceases to be capitalism. Recently business men of a large city issued a statement in which they advised the changing of the wage-system to one of partnership and profit-sharing. They did not seem to be aware of the fact that such a fundamental change as giving up the primacy of capital over labor would put an end to traditional capitalism.

Why is modern capitalism doomed? In general, because of its failure to attain the social ends proper to any economic system and likewise the higher ends of any social system. Specifically:

(1) Because economically capitalism calls for an unbalanced and unbalancing distribution of the gross returns of its enterprises. Capitalist activity can in reality flourish and increase only through an increase of purchasing power among the rank and file of the people, whereas the dynamism of capitalism depends on and demands the ever greater accumulation of capital in the hands of the few, and new labor-saving devices have helped much to decrease still farther the general purchasing power of the people.

(2) Capitalism is linked up with a financial structure organized to supply means of investment and only those, whereas the great need in an age of potential plenty is a system that can supply greater purchasing power.

(3) Capitalism has reduced hundreds and thousands to a state of chronic malnutrition and even of starvation.

(4) Capitalism has starved the souls of millions, even of many whom it made materially rich. Today the laboring classes have come to a common consciousness of spiritual starvation as human beings. It will be impossible to satisfy them in the long run by any amount of material goods, especially by any paternalistic treatment such as a good farmer will mete out even to a good horse or a good milch cow.

(5) Capitalism has ceased to be the promoter even of the best possible material and social progress. Because of the high-powered investment in gigantic centralized machinery, it cannot afford to keep pace with new inventions for human good in so far as these mean the scrapping or replacing of machinery long before the expected profit has been made from it. Compare, e.g., an article

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entitled "If Industry Gave Science a Chance," in *Harper's Magazine,* February, 1935.

(6) Capitalism has prostituted culture to the seeking after material gain. It has commercialized our legitimate stage, still more the cinema and popular literature, often appealing to man's lowest animal instincts for its greater economic returns. Even our newspapers with few exceptions are no longer purveyors of the truth, but capitalistic enterprises for greater profit, public lie and scandal sheets—a great calamity in a democratic country.

Just because capitalism is doomed, it is imperative for Christians to look not backward but forward. It will not do for them to be merely "anti" this or that, least of all to be merely anti-communistic. They must also be "pro" something. Certainly, without being that, Catholics cannot boast of being lay apostles in the reconstruction of a new social order.

But pro what? Who can look into the future and determine the right technical structure of a Christian order? Certainly, the Pope refused to do that in the "Quadragesimo Anno." He pointed out fundamental principles of Christian social reconstruction and leaves the rest to time and to us.

In the meantime there are various movements for social reconstruction under way even now, that have two points in common: (1) they are opposed alike to capitalism, communism and fascism; (2) their principles and aims are in harmony with the Christian ideal of life. I am referring to the cooperative movement, of which much has already been written in these pages, and of the corporative order of Christian sociologists, of the personalist movement of the Amis d'Esprit in Europe and of the distributist-agrarian movement of England and America. A Christian can support any of these movements without having to believe that it is the all-embracing program for a new social order. But he cannot refuse to support at least one of them without being guilty of neglecting his social duty and of allowing iniquitous capitalism to lead to its logical conclusion in either communistic collectivism or the equally totalitarian fascism.

Apostle on the Bum

By JOSEPH A. BREIG

EVERYONE calls him Peter, perhaps more wisely than they know; for Peter Maurin of the *Catholic Worker,* like another Peter, is laboring to reconstruct a civilization that is collapsing under the weight of its sins. The Mystical Body of Christ is his devotion, the Christianity of the Apostles his ideal, and the corporal works of mercy his gospel. With Pope Saint Clement he asks, "Why do the members of Christ tear one another . . .?"

He is gnarled and shabby and somewhat disreputable, and seems to enjoy being called an agitator and a bum, because he regards activity and poverty as two indispensable qualifications for his particular apostolate.

Once he was attending a Rural Life Conference in Rochester, New York, and was moved to disagree strongly with some of the other delegates. In English thickly accented, Peter made some pungent observations about getting people back on the land. He was misunderstood, perhaps as much because of his unprepossessing appearance as because of his broken English. The delegates took him for a Bolshevik, or at least an intruder, and wished that he might depart.

But there was present Bishop Hugh C. Boyle of Pittsburgh, who does not quail before ideas. He intervened, and led a stimulating discussion. At its conclusion, when all heads were nodding agreement, he waved a plump hand toward Peter and said: "That's what this man has been trying to tell you!" The Bishop did not know "this man." But Peter, so the tale goes, was introduced, and was chided by His Excellency for concealing thoughts so good under an accent so bad.

Peter got his accent—like everything else except a few freight rides—honestly. He was born in the south of France, son of mountain peasants who walked miles each Sunday to assist at Mass in an ancient Romanesque church. When he was nine, his mother died. His father remarried. Most of the twenty-three children are living today.

When Peter grew up, he became a peddler of coffee, tea and chocolate. But sales were few, and he went to Paris, where his associations stimulated the thinking that was to shape his mind. In 1909, he went to Canada. With the help of a friend, he staked out a homestead in Saskatchewan. But the friend was killed in a hunting accident, and Peter was forced to abandon his claim. Penniless, he started his wanderings.

For fifteen years he went hither and yon. He got out of the habit of attending Mass, because he seldom stopped anywhere long enough to hang up his hat. Job followed job, and he usually quit after "two, t'ree mont'." The work was hard, but Peter always gave a fair return for his wages. Mostly, he labored for building contractors and railroads. He left the Canadian Pacific to dig sewers in Alberta, and he quit digging sewers to heave stone in Ottawa. He tried lumberjacking in the Adirondacks, but found it "too damp."

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His first chore in the United States was at Ogdensburg, New York, where he tore down concrete forms. From there, with a little money, he went to New York, and quickly was penniless. So he went on the bum. He begged his way to Baltimore, to Washington, to Cumberland, and across the Maryland border into Pennsylvania. In the Keystone State, he was arrested for vagrancy. He tells it:

"I wanted a drink of water. I knocked on a door. The woman tried to open it, but it was stuck with the frost. I started pushing to help her. The neighbors thought I was trying to break in. So, to please the neighbors, the chief of police put me in jail. Two days later—to please the neighbors—he let me go."

Years later, Peter was to write:

People who are in need
and are not afraid to beg
give to people not in need
the occasion to do good for goodness' sake.
Modern society calls the beggar
bum and panhandler
and gives him the bum's rush.
But the Greeks used to say
that people in need are the
ambassadors of the gods.
Although you may be called bums
and panhandlers
you are in fact the Ambassadors of
God.

At the moment, however, Peter was not writing. He was too busy living. From the jail, he made his way to the coal regions of western Pennsylvania. Near Brownsville, he got a job with the H. C. Frick Coal and Coke Company. That was the winter of 1912. Peter got $1.50 a day, and lived in a coke oven with a Negro. He liked it, he says, because "the Negro was a gentleman." There was no housework to do.

"The next-door oven was in operation," he recalls. "The heat from it kept us warm. It was a simple life. All you had to do was to crawl in and lie down, and you were at home. What did we sleep on? The bricks, I suppose. I think the Negro did the cooking. Maybe that was what I liked about it."

Death brushed Peter at Brownsville. He was digging a ditch to keep a hillside from sliding, when a boulder broke loose and thundered past within arm's reach. Peter sighed, and resumed his digging.

Doubtless he did some thinking. Few things are more conducive to it than the ranks of coke ovens, flaming as luridly as the outposts of hell. And mysticism feeds on the mountains of slag, burning inside, which in daylight are drab and smoky, but at night flicker with eerie fires like those on Mount Alvernia when Saint Francis was impressed with the stigmata.

Peter now had a taste of luxury. He "rode the blinds" to Akron, Ohio, and got a job at $2 a day with a building contractor. But wealth palled, and he moved to a paint shop in Chicago. Soon he was back on a railroad.

But, "they sent us to the rock pile at the Galena lead mines. The rocks were pretty heavy, and they cut our wages from $.17½ to $.17 an hour. So I quit. I started back to Chicago on the Great Western Railroad. I was riding I. O. U. I couldn't pay until I got to Chicago to collect my wages. But the railroad detectives couldn't see it that way. I was arrested again."

Released, Peter hired out as a freight handler on a boat plying between Chicago and Muskegon, Michigan. He quit because "there was too much boss. I like to use my own judgment." He went to Detroit, and worked in the yards of the Michigan Railroad. He slept in a box car, and "it made me sick. It wasn't warm like the coke oven. So I quit." He could have worked for Ford, but "Ford wasn't paying $5 a day then." He tried a lumberyard, but was laid off when work got slack. Then, for three months, he labored in a sawmill near Kalamazoo.

He returned to Chicago, and borrowed a ride by rail to Decatur, Illinois, where jobs were available. But "I didn't like the job, so I didn't take it." He hopped a freight to St. Louis, and took another railroad job at his accustomed wage—$1.50 a day. In St. Louis, he says, he got acquainted with the hillbillies, and liked them. But he didn't like the boss, so he quit. In Peoria, he worked "'bout two months" in a syrup factory.

Back in Chicago, he worked as janitor's helper in an apartment-house. The basement, where he slept, was warm and dry, so he stayed six months. Then he became a full-fledged janitor for an upholsterer, and remained three months. He came perilously close to settling down in a dry goods store on Chicago's South Side. "I stuck it out for two years and a half. They were fine gentlemen. They were Jews. But I thought I ought to have a raise, and I wouldn't ask for it. So I quit."

The next time, he was fired after two years as janitor in a North Side apartment-house. Then came the war, and opportunity knocked. Teachers of French were needed. Peter opened an office. He taught for eight years, and then went to New York at the request of a pupil. After a winter, he moved to a writers' and artists' colony at Woodstock. There, "I gave up the idea of charging for lessons. The whole world had gone crazy, and I decided to be crazy in my own way. They didn't let me starve."

All this time, Peter had been reading. He was familiar with Marx, but was never attracted to Communism. "I was much more inclined to anarchy."

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In this period—1927—was born the first group of those Easy Essays that have become the delight of the simple and the learned, and the dismay of the mediocre. Ironically, the first one was delivered before the Rotary Club of Kingston, New York.

"One of the Rotarians," Peter relates, "thought he'd have a good laugh, so he invited me to address the club. I told them this:

"The other fellow says
that I am queer:
and that is normal.
When he says that I am queer
he means I am queer
to him.
I may be queer to him,
But he is queerer to me,
and he being queerer to me
than I am queer to him,
he hasn't a chance
to make me normal.
So I am trying to make him queer
so we can both
be normal!"

Peter told the Rotarians something else. "Watch out, fellows! If you put too much money into business, you are going to put business out of business!"

"And they did," Peter adds, "so now they call me the prophet of the depression in Kingston."

About this time, Peter started his career as an agitator. He traveled the night boats between Kingston and New York, and made speeches in Union Square. "Union Square," he says, "was in process of becoming Red Square. So I went there to keep Union Square Union Square."

For two years, Peter went on teaching French for the good of his body, and agitating for the good of his soul. Then he quit teaching French.

By that time, he had reconciled himself with the Church, and had resumed his religious duties. Further, he was discovering the dynamite in Catholicity, of which he wrote later:

Catholic scholars
have taken the dynamite of the Church
have wrapped it up
in nice phraseology
placed it
in an hermetic container
and sat on the lid.
It is about time
to blow the lid off
so the Catholic Church
may again become
the dominant social dynamic force.

Peter dropped his French teaching in favor of manual labor at a boys' camp at Mt. Tremper, New York, conducted by Father Joseph B. Scully. Some of his Easy Essays, he says, "were born in ditches" at that camp. He began to write more and to talk less, because "people will read; they will not listen."

And now Peter Maurin, "panhandler and bum," became an answer to prayer. It was December, 1932. In Washington, D. C., Dorothy Day, writer, was reporting for *America* and THE COMMONWEAL the Farmers National Convention, and the Hunger March of the Communist Unemployed Councils. On December 8, she spent the morning at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. As she later wrote: "There was social justice in the demands made by the Communists. They were among those of whom Christ was thinking when He said, 'Feed my sheep.' And the Church had food for them, that I knew. . . . So I offered up my prayers that morning that some way be shown me. . . ."

Can prayer ever fail? In Mt. Tremper, Peter Maurin read two articles by Dorothy Day, one in the *Sign*, the other in THE COMMONWEAL. He dropped his pick and hastened to New York. From George N. Shuster of THE COMMONWEAL, he got Dorothy Day's address. He went to her home, but was told she was still in Washington.

Peter recalls, "Dorothy's brother thought I was a tramp, and I think he felt like kicking me out. But Dorothy's sister-in-law is Spanish and has a Spaniard's courtesy. She told me to come back."

He did, saw Dorothy, and (as he puts it) "gave her the idea for the *Catholic Worker*." As a matter of fact, he did much more than merely give her an idea. He laid before her the result of his long reading and thinking: the complete program of the Catholic Worker Movement, with plenty of Easy Essays to make it clear to workers.

Briefly, Peter proposed round-table discussions, houses of hospitality, and farming communes, based upon the philosophy that "voluntary poverty and works of mercy are techniques to put over a program and reach workers (brain and hand)."

The *Catholic Worker* monthly was started the following May. The first issue was written and edited in the kitchen of a tenement, on subway platforms, on the "L," on ferry-boats. The first editorial was addressed to "those who are sitting on benches, huddling in shelters, walking the streets," and told them: "The Catholic Church has a social program."

Peter went back to Mt. Tremper. In September, he returned to New York and joined the *Catholic Worker* staff permanently. In October he fell ill. "I had a fever, and they sent me to a hospital. I was well in one day, but they kept me three. That gave me two days to think."

He thought about Marxism. He wrote an article about it, and enlarged upon his plan for a new social order founded upon Catholic workers. He came out of the hospital to realize his program. In December, 1933, the first House of

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Hospitality, dedicated to Saint Joseph and the older Saint Teresa, was opened in the parish of the Immaculate Conception Church, to house twelve homeless women. Blankets and beds were needed, so: "We will use those of the editors," said the *Catholic Worker*. "They can roll themselves in coats and newspapers. . . . Christ's first bed was of straw."

In March, 1934, the *Catholic Worker* opened its Workers' School with a lecture by Carlton J. H. Hayes, followed by a speech by E. F. Carter, Negro editor of *Opportunity*. Peter Maurin celebrated with an Easy Essay proclaiming, "The scholars must become workers so the workers may be scholars."

Two months later, Peter and some of his friends took up quarters in a branch office in Harlem "to show to the Negro what the Church has to offer." Editorially, he quoted Father Gillis of the *Catholic World*: "The black man and the white man are by God's creation brethren, children of the same Father on earth, and the same Father in heaven, redeemed alike by Jesus Christ and having equal rights."

Furiously active, but now at last going somewhere, Peter next proposed the Catholic Workers' Farming Commune according to the ideals of Saint Benedict. The project was started on Staten Island, with the editorial mandate: "The scholars must be workers, and those who come will also till the soil whether they are visiting for a day or a week." There was one absolute condition attached to the location of the commune: "It must be near a church, since a life which is not centered around the Blessed Sacrament is no life at all."

From the beginning, the *Catholic Worker* was illustrated by Ade Bethune, whose genius it is to picture Christ and His saints as they were: Saint Joseph with his saw; Saint Theresa, The Little Flower, over a wash-tub; Saint Martha peeling potatoes; Saint Benedict weeding a garden; Saint Francis sweeping a church; Saint John the Baptist unkempt in rags; Jesus with His arms around children white and black.

The results have been miraculous. Peter has no idea how many are now associated in the *Catholic Worker* crusade. He knows only that the paper's circulation is 115,000, and there are groups in Pittsburgh, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, Rochester, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Los Angeles and Houma, Louisiana.

Peter is not one-sided. He sometimes finds fault with labor, and warns the workers that they must give justice to employers. Of labor unions, he says:

"In fostering collective bargaining, they do a good thing. But collective bargaining should never lead to collectivism. Collective bargaining ought to be a breathing spell for the indoctrination of workers in personalist democracy. The workers must learn to create a new society within the shell of the old with the philosophy of the new; which is not a new philosophy, but a very old philosophy; so old that it looks like new. I mean Christianity. 'Christianity has not failed,' said Chesterton, 'for the very good reason that it has not been tried.' Christianity has not been tried, because people thought it was not practical. Men have tried everything except Christianity, and everything men have tried has failed. To fail in everything that one tries is not considered practical by so-called practical men. So, so-called practical men will be practical when they start to practice the Christianity they profess to believe."

Peter is still a wayfarer. He carries his apostolate all over the country, traveling by bus, and trusting to the donations of friends to pay his fares. In slum or university, he is always at home. He has his health, and no worries. He remembers that "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air their nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head."

His solution for the economic ills of the world is simple and divinely perfect: "Feed the hungry for Christ's sake, clothe the naked for Christ's sake, shelter the homeless for Christ's sake, instruct the ignorant for Christ's sake . . . like the first Christians, of whom the pagans said, 'See how they love one another!' "

Into tenement and chancellery, Peter takes his gospel of the Mystical Body. "I am the vine; you are the branches." "We are all members, one of another."

He sees as the crying need of the day a return to the spirit of Franciscan poverty and charity. Of Communists his newspaper says, "Most Catholics speak of them with the bated breath of horror. And yet those poor unfortunate ones who have not the Faith to guide them are apt to stand more chance in the eyes of God than those indifferent Catholics who sit by and do nothing for the 'least of these' of whom Christ spoke."

In New York, Peter goes daily to St. Andrew's Church, behind City Hall, to attend noon Mass. Usually he receives Communion. He lives in voluntary poverty among the involuntarily poor. To his banner have flocked young men and women who might have wasted their lives in aimless luxury.

Peter is a humorist. His unpublished Easy Essay on "the Greeks, the Jews and the Irish, a thousand years ago," is a classic which you must get from him. But he is also a realist. The gospel he preaches is the gospel of the Christ Who dismayed the comfortable folk of His day.

Peter is grey, stocky and thick-chested. His shoes are soled like a peasant's, his hat is torn and stained, his overcoat frayed. His horn-rimmed spectacles ride askew on his face. His hands are knotted, his neck corded. He has that granite solidity which comes of the hardest of hard work.

Peter, in a word, is a rock.

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Life in a Large Family

By AMANDA BENJAMIN HALL

UNLESS born one of a half-dozen children (or more, or slightly less), one should not attempt to write of the corporation known as "the large family." Let the uninitiate bring all imagination to bear upon the subject, and the picture will yet be a synthetic one. Again, it is nearly impossible to obtain perspective on this particular "design for living" while one is answering the roll call as Child Number 5, 6 or 7. Only in retrospect, and after an interval of fifteen years, has the scene become clarified in my mind, and I see it with all its high lights and shadows. (Here let me state that I greeted life as the fourth child of the family, and after me came two other "blessed events." I may add that, save for brief absences, I lived at home until I was thirty. Home life had me in its current: I was borne down, so to speak, and assimilated—too much a part of my surrounding element to appraise it. In short, I could not see the woods because of the trees.)

Since that time I have reached a number of conclusions in regard to only children, and children of large families. Also I have weighed the relative merits of the two kinds of establishments—the kind where the chairs in the drawing-room are carefully preserved Heppelwhite and Chippendale, and the kind where the drawing-room becomes "the living-room" and there is a school book in every mongrel chair except the one occupied by the cat! It is interesting to consider the stresses and strains of life in a houseful of children, then, paradoxically, to attempt to prove that these same children become more useful members of society than the blossoms which are nurtured as part of a restricted bouquet.

Let us face the disadvantages frankly and fairly. When, in a large family, is there time to foster the genius of any one child? If the parents are of limited means, the mother is too busy trying to make a go of it, the father is too worn down by financial burdens, to spend hours at the elbow of the precocious offspring with a taste for drawing or writing. If, on the other hand, the family is an affluent one, the mother, with her social obligations, and the father, with his complicated responsibilities, can do little more than place the sons and daughters in the hands of competent educators and hope that whatever is there will come out! In either case something is lost, something intimate and valuable in the way of guidance.

Then there is the matter of forming attachments, the delicate mechanism of which is so seldom respected. The girls criticize their brothers' friends; the boys pronounce snap judgments on their sisters' beaux. A letter, a telephone call, becomes public property. Nothing remains private, nothing is let alone. Any small failing or personal idiosyncrasy is ruthlessly exposed and harped on. Among brothers and sisters conceit is never allowed to flourish. (I remember once telling a humorous story on an occasion when we had a guest for dinner. Barely were the words out of my mouth when there rose a chorus of jeers from my inevitable critics. "Chestnuts, chestnuts! Why, that one's as old as the hills!" The guest, who chanced to be a doctor, was greatly amused. "How good a thing must be to get by here!" he observed and patted my hand in commiseration.)

Then there is the wearing confusion of a crowded domicile. "Trains arriving and trains departing," observed a woman caller dryly, standing with a sort of honest wonder in our hall as boys and girls streamed up the stairs and cascaded down. "Yes," said my mother with equal dryness, "those are the children with their friends and their friends' friends. . . ."

Meal hours were fraught with the utmost uncertainty and excitement. Though the dinner was served at the allotted time, rarely was there a full complement to partake of it. One girl had not returned from dancing school or the boy that was being tutored was late, or a visiting uncle, in from hunting, was having a bath. Or it might even be a combination of all these circumstances.

In the matter of choosing a vacation spot, each year there was the liveliest divergence of opinion, until we hit upon the expedient of placing the names of resorts under consideration in a hat, and picking one out at random. If it was thus decreed that we go to the mountains, the mountains "had it," the die-hards complaining bitterly that it should have been the shore.

When, recently, I visited in the home of some much-loved relatives, to my surprise the old scenes were reenacted so vividly that I could have believed I was back in my childhood. The mother of the family, her sweetness flavored with fun, like a dash of peppermint, was always marshaling her brood to meet some social requirement or other event, having a time limit. The father, godlike in his understanding of the diverse temperaments with which he had to deal, had long ago given up the method of direct attack, which he left to his wife. If he ruled his offspring it was in oblique fashion, with an economy of effort and language. Yet he was in no sense a "Mr. Milquetoast." Rather, one felt that he had risen superior to the rôle of family policeman. He had weighed

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the importance and lack of importance of all possible encounters and clashes of will. Where he felt it was not worth while to interfere, he was silent. When occasion made it necessary, he laid upon his children the authority of some quiet word, often a mere monosyllable, but effective.

I watched with singular relish the functioning of these parents when an expedition to the movies was in preparation. Let me make you privy to the scene. Father, who has learned that to assist is to hinder, goes to the garage, takes out the family car, and turns it about in the small area behind the city dwelling. Philosophically placing a wad of gum in his mouth, he settles himself to wait, huge, timeless, unruffled and resigned, having his own defense mechanism. Within the house confusion reigns. "Where is Georgie?" "Georgie is taking a nap." "Does she know Dad is in the car?" Quite obviously she does not. She must be waked and told. Georgie's reaction is that she does not like the picture at the Bijou. Neither, it develops, does Betty. They must be indulged with the promise that they will be dropped at the Lyceum before the others go on to the Bijou. "Where are the dogs?" Someone must secure the dogs and feed them. This office is taken over by Mother, but in reaching for a can of dog-meat she sends the electric iron crashing to the floor. There is a howl from an outraged canine. Is it hurt or is it merely provoked? Mother calls off all operations to take the dog in her arms and rock it. "Poor little Brownie, did I hurt you?" In the meantime the oldest girl who has "gone literary" enters with a flourish of trumpets, as it were, a book in hand, and cries dramatically, "I'm mad about Lord Byron. Listen to this!" and she proceeds to read four or five lines of poetry to which no one listens. After what seems to me a passage of hours, we find ourselves in the car. Father, still solaced by his gum, assures himself of a cargo and, still wordless, starts the motor.

Net result a harvest of neurotics? Not at all. What, in general, results from these homely scenes of fierce activity, devotion and dissension, are boys and girls equipped at every point to meet life as they will find it. The girls will inevitably have some working knowledge of nursing and domesticity, the boys self-reliance and humor. For though it has seemed at times there was a hopeless lack of coordination, somehow, deep-seated and inherent in their natures, there is the sturdy determination to "carry on."

Then, too, there is the birth of the parental instinct. Tall Mary wipes little Reggie's nose and gives him trenchant advice in good manners. John is making a ball-player out of the same Reggie, and in a letter to his pal is the ambiguous statement, "Reggie simply eats flies." Nothing in the way of hardship or sudden crisis will later surprise these boys and girls and find them unprepared. Always there will be the precedent of how Father or Mother behaved when the car tipped over or the three youngest came down with scarlet fever. The old sofa, with its sagging springs, is, after all, a princely cradle. The scuffed door-sill is the threshold of life.

A Christian Social Order

By BISHOP EDWIN V. O'HARA

"NOWADAYS, as more than once in the history of the Church, we are confronted with a world which in a large measure has almost fallen back into paganism. In order to bring back to Christ these whole classes of men who have denied Him, we must gather and train from amongst their very ranks auxiliary soldiers of the Church, men who know their mentality and their aspirations, and who with kindly fraternal charity will be able to win their hearts. Undoubtedly the first and immediate apostles of the workingmen must themselves be workingmen, while the apostles of the industrial and commercial world must be employers and merchants. It is your chief duty, Venerable Brethren, and that of your clergy, to seek diligently, to select prudently, and train fittingly these lay apostles amongst workingmen and amongst employers."

This paragraph from "Quadragesimo Anno," addressed by our Holy Father Pope Pius XI to the bishops of the Church, explains clearly and adequately the auspices and the purposes of the Conference on Catholic Social Action which will be held in Milwaukee during the first days of the month of May, under the distinguished patronage of Archbishop Stritch. The theme of the Congress will be "A Christian Social Order." The program has been planned by the committee of bishops charged with the direction of the department of Social Action of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the details being prepared by the Social Action Department, with the collaboration of the School of Social Sciences of the Catholic University of America and the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems. The speakers will be, in the first place, archbishops and bishops and their clergy, whose "chief duty" has been signalized in the closing sentence of the above quotation. Associated with them as "auxiliary soldiers of the Church" will be numerous lay men

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and lay women, who know the mentality and aspirations of their fellow citizens in the industrial world; representatives of workingmen and of employers, and of the professions, who may be fittingly trained to become lay apostles among their own classes and groups and occupations, and "with kindly fraternal charity" bring back to Christ "whole classes of men who have denied Him."

A Christian social order! Certainly no theme more elevated and at the same time more practical, in the best and truest sense, could be proposed for the consideration of intelligent Christians and patriotic American citizens. A social order involves something more than a multitude of individuals driven by self-interest into an economic organization under the domination of capitalist or proletariat. It means a social organism based on some defensible concept of man's personality and social character; some understanding of man's dignity and of his relation to his fellow man. It is here that the Christian philosophy of man soars above all pagan and materialistic theories of self-interest, of class domination or of racial superiority; and it is precisely here that Christian faith contains the seed of a social order capable of providing that balance of liberty and security which is necessary for even the moderate happiness and welfare of the majority of human beings.

It is hardly necessary to recall those oft-repeated principles: that man is endowed with personality, a spiritual being, rational and possessed of free will; that he has an eternal destiny which he has an obligation to attain; consequently that he has a right to the temporal means to attain that destiny and a duty to use these means according to the moral law; that, possessing his inherent personal dignity, he is an end in himself and may not be used or exploited by others in a way calculated to thwart the attainment of his destiny. Consequently there is an order of justice.

Besides, man is by nature a social being. God, Who is his Father in heaven, is also the Father of all mankind. Men therefore are brothers, sons of a common Father. They are also sprung from a single pair of first parents, and constitute a fraternity of blood relations. Men must take into consideration the common good, the general welfare, and not merely prosecute their own individual rights and the vindication of their selfish interests. We are then "our brothers' keepers," in spite of Cain's sophism. We have responsibilities for our neighbors' well-being. These obligations are binding in conscience. As Leo XIII said, there are "dictates of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man." He gave as an instance the obligation of an employer to pay a living wage—not what the employee had to accept as an alternative to starvation, but a wage which would maintain the frugal laborer in decent comfort. And the employee must render a "fair day's work for a fair day's pay." There emerges, then, from the social nature of men, from the fact that men are brethren, an order of social justice.

This order of social justice involves reciprocal obligations between individual men and between groups of men. It involves the further important principle that power begets responsibility. *Noblesse oblige.* This holds not only for captains of industry, but also for generals of finance. It is immoral for financial power to divorce itself from responsibility for the terrible consequences of its selfish control of money and credit. Nor can powerful organizations of labor escape moral responsibility if they foster violence or oppress the public.

The social order of which we speak is not the creation of a moment, nor is it accomplished by wishful eloquence. It must be laboriously and painstakingly promoted by intelligent, by Christian and in our country by democratic methods—chiefly by education, legislation and organization.

When we speak of education for the Christian social order, we mean, of course, in the first place, a study of the teaching of the Gospel of Christ, as set forth in Sacred Scriptures and in the Christian tradition, and most particularly as happily elucidated in the immortal encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI. These are the charter of the Social Action Department of the N.C.W.C., and the most important guides of Catholic faculties of social science. I was privileged to bear testimony to the influence in America of Leo's encyclical on the "Condition of Labor," before an international gathering in the courtyard of the Cancelleria in Rome, on the occasion of the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of that encyclical, May 14, 1931. Certainly, after the lapse of seven years, one can today testify with enthusiasm to the profound influence of "Quadragesimo Anno" on American thinking, both within and without the Catholic Church.

It is not enough, however, to study the text of the encyclical. It is necessary also to study the current economic scene with a view to observing its departure from the principles of the encyclicals, and also with a view to its restoration to harmony with those encyclicals. Such will be a primary purpose of the Milwaukee Conference on Social Action, for, as Archbishop Stritch aptly remarked in announcing the conference, it is intended to be "a sort of 'popular university' where the clergy and lay leaders may train themselves to carry on after the mind of the Church, a true Catholic social apostolate."

It will not be sufficient to engage in a process of education; the field of social legislation must be cultivated. The breakdown of the old liberal-

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ism, Pius XI points out, permitted civil society to enter more actively into promoting the welfare of its less protected citizens.

The Pope strongly praises "the new branch of jurisprudence unknown to earlier times, whose aim is the energetic defense of the sacred rights of the workingmen, which proceed from his dignity as a man and as a Christian. These laws concern the soul, the health, the strength, the housing, workshops, wages, dangerous employments—in a word, all that concerns the wage earners, with particular regard to women and children," and he correctly attributes a large degree of the momentum of social legislation to the salutary influence of Leo's encyclical.

A terrifying sense of insecurity undermines the morale, not only of workingmen, but likewise of industrialists and bankers. Millions are unemployed, thousands more may be thrown out of work through no fault of their own. Small business men who were the pillars of their local communities find themselves reduced to the status of employees of chain industries. Men who have served industries, or even who have given the best years of their lives to the teaching profession, are thrown on the human scrap heap without consideration. Business insecurity, as I have said, involves even the supposed masters of the economic world. Truly "the whole economic life has become hard, cruel, and relentless in a ghastly measure" ("Quadragesimo Anno"). It is not surprising that a constructive statesmanship should strive by social legislation to combat these evils.

The character and extent of this legislation today must be carefully considered by the Christian citizen, so that it will neither fail to protect the needy, nor project itself into fields better cared for by voluntary organization. Here is needed a wise statesmanship, looking truly to the common welfare, not dazzled on the one hand by specious, communistic hallucinations; nor, on the other, suffering the civil authority to be stricken by liberalistic arthritis. It may be expected that many aspects of social legislation will be competently examined during the Milwaukee Conference.

As is well known, Leo XIII and Pius XI have looked with greatest hope to voluntary associations as the basis of a truly Christian social order.

It is unnecessary to recall here the Pope's ringing defense of the right of voluntary associations to battle for the economic welfare of their members. Labor organizations owe a tremendous debt both to Leo and to Pius, a debt which, generally speaking, labor organizations in America will gladly acknowledge. But Pius goes beyond the embattled organization of labor and capital and seeks to enlist a friendly and democratic quest for their mutual welfare, among employers, employees and consuming public, concerned in any major occupation or industry.

The question is posed: how far can employers and employed find mutual advantage in harmonious cooperation? The special significance of the Social Action meeting in Milwaukee will probably be found in the score of sectional conferences given over to exploring this problem. Steel and railroads and coal; clothing trades, building trades and packing—to mention only a few—will be studied by employer, employee and the public, to find what has been accomplished at best in this direction, and what is the prospect of extending the frontier of this "best" in each occupation. Nor will the social aspects of the learned professions be neglected. Law and medicine will be interrogated to find their possible contribution to a Christian social order.

But of course social justice is not all. Underlying all there must be, as Pope Pius XI says, social charity. A Christian social order presupposes a Christian people. The dignity of a man and a Christian provides the basis of social justice—but "the longed-for social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit." "If society is to be healed," said Leo, "in no way can it be healed save by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions."

For of a truth, in every age the Catholic Church has been laying the foundation of a Christian social order: in the preaching of the Gospel to individuals, to families and nations, to rich and poor, in the administration of the sacraments, in calling men to repent of their sins, in gathering the faithful around the altar of Eucharistic Sacrifice, in dispensing to them the bread of heaven at the altar rail, in opening to them the treasures of her liturgy, in exemplifying the spiritual and corporal works of mercy; in a word, in the apostolic world-wide fulfilment of her divine commission to incorporate all men as truly living members of the ideal Christian social order, the Mystical Body of Christ.

It would be a fatal omission in any Catholic Conference on Social Action, indeed it would miss the whole point of a Christian social order, to forget for a moment the truth which Saint Cyprian so eloquently inculcated: "It is with Christ that we journey and we walk with our steps in His footprints; He it is Who is our guide and the burning flame that illumines our paths. . . ." The true Christian social order will be finally achieved only when "by faithful imitation of His example, we become true Christians, other Christs."

Now the Slow Dawn

Now the slow dawn, relentless along the prairie,
Dredges unready men out of the pits of sleep.
Untwine your heart from the dream, rise, go out to the dairy.
Go out to the north mowing, surely the dream will keep.

BELLE TURNBULL.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

MR. OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, who was initiated into journalism "in the days of small circulations and of great editors like Godkins, Watterson, Dana, Raymond and many others," finds that "nothing impresses me more clearly that I am a journalistic back-number than certain modern manifestations of our daily journalism." In his department in the *Nation,* "Issues and Men," for the issue of April 16, Mr. Villard tells us how he was taught in the days of his apprenticeship to the press that "newspapers were rated and sold, first, on their editorial ability and, secondly, on their news worth." But nowadays the standards are different. Says Mr. Villard: "The great discovery of modern publishers is that it is the exploitation of the human personality, and especially of the female face and figure, which is the great highway to success, the real road to prosperity and power." Mr. Villard then proceeds with a mordant analysis of what he considers to be the finest example of this tendency that he has seen in a recent issue of the New York *World-Telegram.*

As he says, we have all—that is, all of us whose experience of the press has covered the last twenty-five years or so—seen this development take place in the popular magazines, with their cover pictures, and their sex confessions, true romances, and all sorts of self-revelations, turned out in such prodigious quantities by notabilities and nonenties alike, and usually fakes. Then came the vast flood of pictorial filth and folly in which even the feeble remains of literary interest retained by the magazine press were swamped by the products of the camera. The daily newspapers seized upon the same methods, greatly aided, as Mr. Villard points out, "by the coming of the one-piece bathing suit, the illustrated advertisements of underwear, and the photographic advance in the picturing of the female model." Meanwhile, the few, dwindling representatives of the great magazines and serious reviews, such as the *Atlantic* and *Harper's,* "languish in the homes of a few liberals and highbrows."

Mr. Villard ought to expand his short sketch of this subject into a book, for there is probably no other journalist who has had a longer and more intimate experience to draw upon. The degradation of the American press can only be realized fully by those whose living memory goes back to a better day, but the knowledge that such a degradation has taken place should be brought home to those who may be able to take part in the necessary attempt to check that degradation before it proceeds so far as to be incurable.

My experience does not go back so far as that of Mr. Villard, but it is quite sufficient to confirm his judgment. There are a few shining exceptions, but in general the great mass of American newspapers are so tawdry, and vulgar, and so crassly commercial, and so devoid of the spirit of Christian culture as to be positively pernicious. Instead of being worthy to be considered the instruments of a true civilization, the vast majority of our city newspapers are a disgrace to democracy. They prove that the influence of Christian culture has become more and more negligible in the United States. They have almost completely surrendered to the vast and swiftly growing spirit of paganism—which, as Mr. Hilaire Belloc very truly says, may be defined as the absence, or the negation, of the Christian Revelation.

This does not mean that in a country which still respected, or at least was still actively conscious of, the Revelation of Christianity, the newspapers would (or should) explicitly profess, still less teach, Christian doctrine. But it does mean that they would not wholly disregard and flout and outrage the traditions and conventions and truths of the Christian religion, but, on the contrary, would take them for granted and would employ them as the necessary standards of their opinions and of their methods of expression. As Mr. Belloc says, where there were only certain patches, so to speak, of paganism in evidence in our books, and the press, and in our social organizations, more and more rapidly these patches are coalescing and joining up into ever larger and larger masses. "It is like the freezing over of a pond," Mr. Belloc writes, "which begins in patches of ice; the patches unite to form wide sheets, till at last the whole is one solid surface."

Probably, Mr. Villard would not agree with this explanation of the cause of the phenomenon he has noticed; but he is the best possible witness to the fact of the degradation of the instrument which was for so long a time considered to be the chief agency of desirable social progress. Let us hope that he will pursue his researches further and acquaint the public with his findings.

Communications

BUSINESS

Kalamazoo, Mich.

TO the Editor: Mr. George O'Connor, in THE COMMONWEAL for March 25, page 609, denounces the pro-labor sympathies of many Catholics (from the Holy Father down), blames this group in part for Communism, and in general reveals a tremendous amount of accumulated resentment against all those who have the temerity to question the right of business to order its own affairs free of union or governmental interference, free of heckling from the "bleachers."

Mr. O'Connor's point of view would have carried much more weight, I think, had he approached the question in another way. In our predominantly capitalistic economy we rely upon the desire for gain, the prospects of profit, as the dynamic force leading to the production of goods and services. All of the necessary and less than necessary things of life are produced only when enterprise (corporations or small business men) sees a fairly good chance of selling the goods or service at a profit sufficiently remunerative to make this type of risk-taking worth while. When the prospects of profit are lessened or disappear, production declines and exhortations from Mr. O'Connor's "bleachers" to do otherwise are futile.

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Now it may be an unfortunate characteristic of our economic system that we must abjectly rely upon fluctuations in prices and business conditions (and therefore prospects for gain) to get food, clothing and shelter produced. But there it is, and unless we in the bleachers are ready to substitute some other driving force for the so-called profit motive, we must not expect to be able to achieve widespread social and economic reforms, which, however desirable they may be in themselves, do have the effect of continually diminishing the margin of profits in all business, eliminating it altogether in certain lines, and in the long run curtailing production. And governmental or union policy calculated to increase the cost of producing goods and services will have just this effect.

To say that business must be content with a smaller margin of profit may be morally correct but it is economically irrelevant in a capitalistic economy, for a smaller margin of profit means less goods produced and a smaller total income for the total labor supply. It is also possible to say that if private enterprise will not produce to the full satisfaction of society, then perhaps production for use by the government in certain lines is an alternative. True, but this is a type of economic organization radically different from the one even ardent New Dealers say they want to "make work."

If we wish to rely upon free enterprise motivated by the quest for gain as the dynamic force that gets things produced, we must immediately subject all of our desired social and economic policies and reforms to this harsh test: will the proposed reform increase costs of production or lessen the amount of profits in various lines of production? It would appear that industrial and financial enterprisers and professional economists are best equipped to answer this question.

Mr. O'Connor asks: "Will business go on building up inventories of finished products that the public will not buy?" Of course not. Whether business should sacrifice interests of capital and draw on ample reserves in order to keep men at work is economically irrelevant. Why won't the public buy these goods industry won't produce? Because the bulk of potential consumers can't, due to lack of purchasing power. Then let the government see to it that more purchasing power gets into the hands of those who need it! Fine! But can this be done, or rather, how far can this process be carried on without further burdening enterprise through increased costs of production and lessened opportunity for profitable operation?

In conclusion, if we really and frankly want to retain our preponderantly capitalistic form of economic organization we cannot afford to indulge too freely our humanitarian and Christian appetite for economic security among the underprivileged one-third of our population.

Had Mr. O'Connor tried to rationalize his grievances in the above fashion he would have been wiser. Instead he chose to dash off an angry tirade in which he destroyed his own case by stating, among other equally absurd things, that "the average business man has far more practical sympathy for the workingman than has the average priest or writer."

J. J. Burns.

Okmulgee, Okla.

TO the Editor: Noting that you are taken to task by Mr. O'Connor of Waterford, New York, for observations set out in your "Week by Week" in the March 11 issue, I write to say, "Stay right in there" and more power to you.

Mr. O'Connor's letter moved me to turn back to the March 11 number to read your very sane comment again. It happened that about the same time I ran in my editorial page in the *Okmulgee County Record* some comment on General Motors, going into the matter of its participation in the maldistribution of income which too much obtains in "big" business.

Again, "Stay right in there." Your course and your policy are right. Your presentation of your viewpoint is timely, temperate, clear and altogether wholesome.

You are setting a pace and an example for Catholic journalism which it is much to be wished were more generally followed.

J. J. Moroney.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: As you detest business men of the country, we believe that you should refuse to accept their dirty money so unjustly and unfairly squeezed out of the poor and I would, therefore, suggest that you return the amount sent you covering next year's subscription.

It seems a strange thing to me that you should uphold the views of "the Leader" by following him in holding up to scorn the business men of the country as infamous characters. Apparently, you do not realize it is like a game. If the component parts do not play as one team, the business does not last long. After all, business men are working for a livelihood, the same as farmers who get all the government assistance in the world and pay their hired help less and work them harder than any business, but you never see them held up to scorn; they had too many votes to be changed over to the New Deal camp.

Idealism is a wonderful thing and ideals are approved by everyone, but facts also have to be considered and when they are not given consideration, in attempting to raise the submerged third, two-thirds are depressed, with consequent unemployment increasing by leaps and bounds, and in the end conditions are worse than when the rush to change the world over began.

Paul W. A. MacMahon.

THE SELFISH MAJORITY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Would not your Christian criticism, in the April 8 editorial, "The Selfish Majority," be as applicable to the President's speeches on the international situation as it is to his Gainesville speech on the national?

In the former as well as the latter, there is an indictment of a selfish minority in the family of nations, with its implication of an unselfish majority. True, none of the latter want war, but not one of the peace-loving nations but wants its own way. One's own way is not the way to peace, but to strife. Christ's way, the way of renuncia-

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tion, the way of the Cross, is the only way to peace, but few men travel that road, and no statesmen. As private men, some may, but as public men they cannot.

Each serves his own selfish public, a public in which not a few, as you well point out, but an overwhelming majority seek not first the Kingdom of God, but their own interests. No minister of state can afford to show his own people the common selfishness of their ways. No minister of the Church can afford not to, without denying their Lord and Master.

FRANK D. SLOCUM.

Minneapolis, Minn.

TO the Editors: The following is quoted from the last paragraph of your editorial of April 8 entitled, "The Selfish Majority": "If we are to build up a new civilization on the ruins of the old, a truly Christian civilization, we must first become converted not to some vague humanitarianism, not to some milk-and-water substitute for orthodox Christianity, but to the Christianity of the Apostolic Age—vibrant, life-giving, intolerant of error, hating sin, but loving the sinner."

This is a splendid thought and beautifully expressed, but you know and I know that every effort has been made to make good Christians of men since the time of our Blessed Saviour. You seem to be of the opinion that this effort has not been successful at least in the case of the business men of this country. What are your reasons for thinking they can be made good Christians in time to save this country if it could not be done in 1900 years?

Apparently you are of the opinion that the business men of this country are to blame for the conditions we now face. I am of the opinion that you are wrong. The truth as I see it is that our President, Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, is attempting to operate the largest business in this country without ever having had any real business experience. It is something he knows nothing about. Professional men such as educators, editorial writers and others who know nothing about the practical side of life and have only the academic point of view criticize the business man without knowing anything about the problems he has to face. These men are very reprehensible because they cause discontentment and dissatisfaction among our people without offering any practical solution of the problem.

The people of this country cannot be contented and happy unless business as a whole is reasonably good. Why not urge the President to establish a permanent plan for the relations between business and government and give the business man some assurance of the future? Business will revive very quickly if such a plan is assured and lived up to by our President.

EDWIN L. SOMERVILLE.

JAPANESE BOYCOTT

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Recently two prominent senators denounced the boycotting of Japanese silk for the convincing reason that it will prove a boomerang. Some people do not realize, or else are not concerned, with the seriousness of such a move to deprive 250,000 workers of a livelihood. Their families and many thousands of people associated with the silk hosiery and garment industry would suffer, as would also thousands of others who depend upon the silk business for their existence.

The Hosiery Workers Union have pleaded with the American people not to boycott their goods, as it will prove most disastrous to them. Some people do not know that China sells us large quantities of raw silk, hence her product would also be affected. It seems ridiculous to advocate such a move when we consider that Japan's share of each pair of hosiery sold is equivalent to only $.10.

Japan, over a period of years, has bought from us tremendous quantities of cotton and hundreds of other products. The trade balance in our favor aggregates many millions of dollars, whereas the reverse applies to our business relations with China.

I am a believer in "Buy American." On the other hand, we cannot live entirely to ourselves. International trade is a vital matter and where countries abroad have been most favorable customers over a period of time, it is only natural to consider exchange of goods with such countries.

Usually, boycotting does not prove successful, as those against whom economic sanctions are pressed find ways of opening trade agreements with other countries who do not favor boycotting.

M. M. THOMAS.

TERROR IN AUSTRIA

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I have read with both interest and profit the article by George Shuster dealing with the Austrian tragedy, in your April 15 edition of THE COMMONWEAL.

Our organization finds it extremely difficult to bring to public knowledge the fact that there are Christian refugees, both Catholic and Protestant, coming out of Germany and Austria. Indeed, the average man and woman seems to believe that the refugee problem is an exclusively Jewish one. We are grateful for all published information which removes this misunderstanding.

In the footnote following Mr. Shuster's article you very properly refer to the opportunity which the Committee for Catholic Refugees from Germany offers to those who wish to help. May we suggest that, as the task is so large and pressing, reference would have been both timely and helpful to the other national agency working for the Christian refugees—the American Christian Committee for German Refugees?

We shall be glad to cooperate in any like manner in our own publications or in any other way that will help meet the needs of these modern Christian martyrs.

FRANK RITCHIE, *Executive Director,*
The American Committee for Christian German Refugees,
287 Fourth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

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Points & Lines

Spending for Prosperity

THE GENERAL impression created in the press after President Roosevelt's fireside chat on present economic conditions was that the press disapproved. For example the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* headed its summary of editorial opinion, "Press Comment on President's Spending Program: Many Papers Hostile, Dubious; Some Approve." Such, in fact, is not precisely the case. Almost all editorial comment grants that government spending is unavoidable and necessary. Said Dorothy Thompson in the New York *Herald Tribune:*

> Now, increase of spending is absolutely unavoidable. In the first place, there are relief needs which will have to be met. There are political and social factors which must be taken into account. A nation with $12,000,000,000 in gold and with every conceivable national resource cannot tolerate 12,000,000 unemployed unable to live or earn a living.

The point on which real difference of opinion arises is as to whether spending should be limited to necessary relief, or extended to "pump-priming." The most intransigent opposition to the latter is well expressed by the Cleveland *Plain Dealer:*

> The President's message, except for the part relating to relief, is fruitage of unsound thinking. No nation can borrow, spend or squander its way back to prosperity. Experience has demonstrated beyond a doubt that government activities of the kind that are again proposed, instead of heartening private enterprise, operate to make both enterprise and capital timid.

The *Nation* admirably sums up the opposing view:

> From a thoroughly realistic point of view, the danger at the moment is not that the government will be bankrupted by excessive spending but that it will not spend enough to stem the relentless tide of deflation. . . . The expression "spending our way to prosperity" has the same paradoxical ring that it had in 1933. But given the pressures which exist within the capitalist system against any other program—reduction in prices, large-scale government enterprise, or even bold private schemes—it remains the only known means of checking economic disintegration.

In general the more "liberal" press, including in this description the organs of Marxist thought, are heartily in favor of spending. Yet the *New Republic* and the *Daily Worker* question the wisdom of the appropriation for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, if this is to make available loans to "the Wall Street foxes and tigers who have been exerting every effort to tear the New Deal program to pieces" (*Daily Worker*).

The press does not question that Congress will implement the President's program. Says Erwin D. Canham in the *Christian Science Monitor:*

> . . . There are many of those who are not only unenthusiastic but positively against big spending who will find it inescapable to vote for the present program. So, on balance, the old electoral rule never to vote against an appropriation bill or for a tax bill remains a guiding factor.

Many press comments note the "temperate tone" which the President used in making his proposals. After calling attention to this, the St. Louis *Post Dispatch* concludes an editorial:

> You have offered a plan, and in the absence of any constructive alternative in Congress it will be accepted. Give your plan a chance to work, Mr. President, by seeing to it, in so far as in you lies, that in America there shall be no "division fostered by hate." Let your program be carried forward in the spirit of self-restraint, of fairness toward all groups of our citizens, that animates your eloquent appeal to the people "to move the life of the nation forward."

Lord Perth and Count Ciano

IN GENERAL the press of the country extended a welcome to the news of the signing of the Italo-British agreement. Walter Lippmann wrote in his syndicated column:

> Ever since the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo combination came into existence, the British power in the world has been paralyzed and Britain has been forced to abandon her professed ideals and her vested interests. It was essential to British interests and to the general interest of the world that this hostile combination should be dissolved. There was really no alternative. For the Eden policy of refusing to bargain and refusing to fight, of bombarding the dictators with angry threats and of retreating before their armed aggression, was leading—in fact it had led—from one major disaster to another. It did not restrain the militarization of Germany; it did not prevent the conquest of Ethiopia; it did not prevent the invasion of China.

The London *Tablet,* commenting in accordance with long-held sympathies, makes a rather good point:

> Much more important than the terms of the agreement is the occasion that it offers for the reeducation of opinion in Britain and for the abatement of the dislike, too often fanatical in character, felt for modern Italy and its leader. . . . There must be a resolute opposition to the steady stream of propaganda in favor of classifying countries by their forms of government, of cheerfully ranging as our enemies countries which really desire good relations.

One of the first of a series of dissenting voices is the *Daily Worker:*

> The Tories are striving to attain their old love, a Four-Power Pact against world peace, particularly against the bulwark of peace, the Soviet Union.

An optimistic editorial which more nearly represents the reception accorded this agreement in the American daily press is found in the New York *World-Telegram,* a target for the moment of much bombardment from the Left:

> The importance of the Anglo-Italian accord, signed in Rome on Easter eve, can hardly be exaggerated. Future historians may see in it the turn of the tide which, in recent years, has threatened to drown mankind in blood. . . . If the pact means anything, it means the beginning of the end of the danger of a Nazi-Fascist-Japanese combination against Britain and France. . . . This to be sure is hardly the kind of peace envisioned by Woodrow Wilson. It falls far short of the League of Nations ideal. It is not our ideal. It certainly is not what the war-weary world hoped for after 1918. But it's the most hopeful prospect the world has been offered in many a day.

A more long-range view is expressed in the *Christian Science Monitor:*

> Better this perhaps than a world blown to bits—small states and all. But much more than this, much more than a big powers' world, is necessary to insure peace and equality for mankind. The best that such contracts as the Anglo-Italian can provide is a recess from fear in which to press on toward a peace with more equal blessings.

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The Stage and Screen

What a Life

GEORGE ABBOTT is not a producer who deals with the deeper things of life; in fact it is rare to have him deal with life at all, or at least with human beings. He is a magnificent manipulator and galvanizer of puppets who in the breathless speed of the direction amuse and almost persuade. No one, not even George S. Kaufman, has a keener knowledge of the wise-crack, or is master of a more headlong pace. He feels and expresses what foreigners assert is the American spirit, and which is certainly the spirit of New York. In the words of Kipling, "he asks no hidden questions," and he permits none of his playwrights to do it. The plays he presents may be trivial and superficial, an escape for the tired business man, little concerned with the things of the spirit, but they are usually good theatre, and though they at times offend good taste they never stand moral values on their head. In one way or another they present the old story of boy meets girl, and the boy always gets the girl. It is adolescent, but it is frequently charming. The plays he produces deal with the foibles of American life, never with the graver problems or the vices; they will neither be read nor remembered, but they are seen and enjoyed, and they are efficient nerve-sedatives for repressions and depressions. And so Mr. Abbott is a benefactor of his fellow men.

"What a Life," written by Clifford Goldsmith, is an Abbott show, and one of the best. In one respect it *is* the best, for it actually contains one real character. Henry Aldrich is the bad boy in the high school. He is lazy, he can't remember dates or anything else, he is always in trouble. Knowing all this, his defense mechanism is continually at work leading him far from the truth of speech, and his inferiority complex is omnipresent. He is at once the despair of his teachers, his parents and himself. One teacher alone realizes the good and the talent that is in him, for Henry's heart is in the right place, and he can draw. In fact Henry is an artist, though he doesn't know this either, and this is the bane of a non-understanding school—and of himself. Only this one teacher and Barbara Pearson, the president of the class, understands him. I won't tell the plot, it is a rather ordinary one, except to say that as in every Abbott play the boy makes good and gets the girl. But the plot isn't what counts: it's the incidents, the dialogue, the atmosphere, and Henry. Henry is a real character, and far from a simple one, hugely amusing, human and poignant. I don't know who Clifford Goldsmith is, but he has created a figure worthy to stand beside any of the adolescents of Booth Tarkington. He is a delight and he ought to appear in future plays. The scene is in the principal's office in a city high school, and through it drift an amusing crowd of teachers, pupils, parents and detectives, all under the harassed gaze of the lugubrious principal. And if it all isn't just what life in a high school is, it ought to be.

Mr. Abbott has cast the play impeccably, and in Ezra Stone he has found a young actor who is unique, a sort of American Roland Young. Mr. Stone is said to be twenty. He looks fifteen. The dead-pan of his face lit up by an occasional twisted smile, which seems to come out and disappear of its own sweet will, the baffled puzzlement with himself and his surroundings, his earnest affection for his girl, his complete and utter seriousness, make his performance one of the most original of the season. It is his play and he makes it a joy. Betty Field is charming as the girl, wistful, humorous and appealing, and Vaughn Glaser as the somber and slightly sardonic principal shows what an accomplished old-time actor he is. Excellent performances too are given by Arthur Pierson as the understanding teacher, by Ruth Matteson as the secretary to the principal, by James Corner as Henry's enemy, and by Edith Van Cleeve in a bit. I wished I could have seen much more of Miss Van Cleeve, and I'm sure that everyone else in the audience agreed with me. "What a Life" is the American farce-comedy of humor at its best. (At the Biltmore Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Dark Eyes

THE LAST picture made by Simone Simon before embarking for Hollywood and a bigger income tax was "Dark Eyes." It is a mere wisp of a story about a young girl who enjoys a sizable bank account, unaware that to provide it her father must bow and scrape as head waiter in a restaurant. The climax arrives when she falls in love with one of his libertine patrons and is taken, all unsuspecting, to the Russian restaurant where Papa is pocketing his evening rubles. Harry Bauer makes of Ivan, the old father who has sacrificed everything for his motherless child, a lovable and human character. He is the European successor to Emil Jannings since the advent of the swastika, famed on the Continent for his work in "Poil de Carotte" and "The Life and Loves of Beethoven." In Simone Simon as Tania there is a dewy innocence rather lacking in subsequent efforts. This picture brought her the screen test through which she attained Hollywood fame. "Dark Eyes" was written and directed by V. Tourjansky for Milo Films. English sub-titles are available for those who can't guess what's going to happen.

Test Pilot

THERE are three courses of action open to the wife of an air man. She can let her husband eat, drink and be merry and then do his job; she can persuade him to give up his job; she can pretend the job is just an everyday affair and not worth worrying about. Myrna Loy as the fear-ridden wife of test pilot Clark Gable is not very convincing in the rôle she finally assumes, but intervals of magnificent aerial photography more than make up for dull spots in the incidental ground scenes. There are dramatic shots aplenty: a heavily loaded tri-motor bomber tries for an altitude mark with the inevitable crash in which mechanic Spencer Tracy loses his life; there is a power dive in which a plane hurtles earthward with its wings crumpling like paper, and there are the usual squadrons flying in spectacular mass formation. Frank Wead (who wrote "Ceiling Zero") has turned out an adequate story of the grim and ruthless business of testing aircraft.

MARY FABYAN WINDEATT.

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Books of the Day

Window Dressers

The Politicos, 1865-1896, by Matthew Josephson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $4.50.

CONSIDERED from any standpoint the period from the end of our Civil War to the defeat of Bryan marks an economic revolution in our history. It is a revolution aided by the national government, which is controlled almost exclusively by the Republican party. High tariffs to protect business, the policy of laissez-faire to prevent the growth of labor power—these things attend it. National wealth increased and, like the natural resources of the country, the means of production and of distribution, passed into the hands of a small group growing daily more audacious. Protest was written down as socialism, strikes as anarchy. The integrity of our institutions was threatened. Unemployment was an act of God. Greed and selfishness were law. A new kind of slavery was growing up. The court seemed to check reform and favor corporate wealth, and the net product of the "war to preserve the Union" was the unscrupulous mastery of finance.

Americans seemed to be unable to arrest the new forces. Recourse to the "Fathers of the Constitution" brought small comfort. The people seemed to have yielded in abject and stunned surrender. Even to intelligent, decent men such surrender appeared to be inevitable. Writing of the Bryan campaign, the detached and esoteric Henry Adams found: "All one's friends, all one's best citizens, reformers, churches, colleges, educated classes, joined the banks to force submission to capitalism; a submission long foreseen by the mere law of mass."

This, then, is the period Mr. Josephson has chosen to write about. In a way his book is a history of the period—a political and economic history, that is to say. It is, on the whole, a good book, though there is in it nothing that is startlingly new. Most of the things he has to tell have been told before. Mr. Josephson tells them well.

It is, however, a hard book that is seldom lighted up by the satire or high comedy the author thinks he finds in the period. The reason for this is that it is a serious book—and Mr. Josephson has a thesis. Occasionally the thesis gets out of hand; often he loses sight of it. Then he calls it back to wrestle with it. Now if you have a thesis, you will seldom stray down bypaths, light campfires in the night or admire the view. And these things the author does not do, for he is bitten by the economic interpretation of history, and Marx and Engels frequently are cited to explain us to ourselves.

The thesis is this: Language conceals thought. There is a difference between the things political leaders think and wish and the things they say. This Henry Adams, I should say, taught us long ago. Or Talleyrand for that matter. "History," says Mr. Josephson, "is made of classes and economic forces in conflict; but history, as all recognize, is also full of heroes and fools who serve for a moment to impede or divert the stream of events or hasten the solution of a foredoomed crisis" (page 693). And again: "Historical actions do not seem to arise from the ideas of men, but rather by the social being of political men" (page ix).

Strange theories these. Mr. Josephson has turned Calvinistic on us with his talk of "foredoomed crisis." Historians are not as certain as this author is of the relations of ideas and interests. Ideas clash with each other as well as with external events. Historians are responsible for the kind of history they write, for writing history is making it whether they will or no. To find evidence that in a given period ideas are tools does not allow of sweeping generalizations in respect of the whole historic purpose.

With this conception of history, then, the author sets forth to prove that the American leaders in politics from Stevens and Sumner, through the Blaines and the Harrisons and the Garfields, to Mark Hanna, preached one thing and believed another, beguiling or coercing the electorate, using the Negro, the Irish and the Americans for their own devious ends. Mr. Josephson makes out a convincing case against the leaders who capitulated to wealth and left to the Progressives, Roosevelt the first, Wilson and F. D. R. problems their greed and stupidity refused to solve.

His treatment of Cleveland is more severe than the present writer has elsewhere seen. Yet it seems just. Mr. Josephson, however, has made some serious errors of interpretation and fact. To speak of President Grant as a "man on horseback" is to be merely absurd (page 63). To say that the Fathers signed the Constitution "with no little disgust" (page 65) is greatly to overstate the facts. He persists in the error that Conkling died in the blizzard of 1888 (page 320). Mr. Josephson, apparently, has not read Conkling's own account of the blizzard. Conkling's writings were never "ghosted." To put the jurist Cooley on the Supreme Court (page 606) beggars belief. Mr. Josephson allows a single fact to produce a manifestly absurd conclusion. It is true that Grant "seemed worried because Motley parted his hair in the middle" (page 88) but to imply that this is the reason for Grant's dismissal of our Ambassador to England is to oversimplify history. Mr. Josephson ought to know that Grant removed Motley to punish Sumner, who did not always vote the way Grant wished. Grant was a pathetic but never a silly figure.

If we count these errors and do not take his theory of history too seriously, Mr. Josephson's book, in which is gathered a tremendous number of facts, is an excellent study of the myths we Americans have lived by.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Your Money and Your Life, by Gilbert Seldes. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. Whittlesey House. $2.50.

THIS book should be read widely because it makes you conscious of the crisis in which democracy finds itself today. The author drives home that the first step toward dictatorial forms of government is increasing indifference on the part of the people in back of representative government. Therefore, it is the purpose of this book to arouse people from their political detachment, and the author concentrates on a very distinct and presumably powerful group: the middle class. The real power of these many unorganized individuals is the money they spend for consumer goods. Since all production is ultimately for consumption, the author believes that a conscious use of that purchasing power will reestablish control over "our money and our life." Much credit is given to the conclusions of the now famous Brookings Report. Unfortunately the policies advocated by this report are not much more than a restatement of a rather old eco-

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nomic idea that lower prices are a prerequisite to increased production and income. It is not possible here to investigate whether these assumptions are valid in our present economic set-up. I want to register only a grave doubt as to the effects of the lowering of costs of production on unemployment.

For students of the crisis of democracy it is interesting to read the author's statement that 90 percent of the legislators, bankers and factory owners do not know even that the Brookings Report does exist. If we concede that this report is as important as the author will have it, this would reveal a sad state of affairs. There is one suggestion to which I fully agree: "Don't wire your congressman." I won't, Mr. Seldes. FRIEDRICH BAERWALD.

The Rest of the World, by Ernest O. Hauser. New York: Stackpole Sons. $2.00.

ALTHOUGH it deals less successfully with the foreign outlook of the American citizen and other more general matters and seems unaware of advances in agronomics, a more satisfactory, impartial compendium of the strategic problems and plans of the Great Powers today is difficult to conceive. It is crammed with the most useful and up-to-date information; it indicates convincingly the broad outlines of conquest and defense that will constitute tomorrow's headlines. But to stave off the terrible forces of aggression the author can offer nothing more dynamic than a revival of Liberalism. E. S.

CRITICISM

Paint and Prejudice, by C. R. W. Nevison. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

MR. NEVISON has that English gift of gracious satire which enables a man to see through shams, intellectual, political or those of the Pharisees—and to laugh at them without getting self-righteous. He has done much to bring art back to the common-sense attitude, that art is a work of the mind and heart and to be understood by the public at large. His dislike for the precious artist who refuses to be a workman, the pseudo-intellectual and the puritan who hates beauty has led him into fighting a continual battle. As the victory of common sense is the goal of all, every artist and lover of art should be grateful to him.

After being deafened by talk that is merely thoughtless noise, from both art critics and artists, it is refreshing to read: "I am not commercially minded, but to paint pictures that never sell and simply cause all other kinds of work to be misapprehended is a task which I find stultifying. Every artist has always too many pictures, and for some reason imaginative pictures are now entirely out of fashion with critics, the buying public and the general public. I do not think any artist can be expected to use what talents he has only to kick against the pricks. One day there will be a reaction and artists will be able to paint fantasies which are the invention of the mind, using realistic form: By that I mean that trees will look like trees and human beings like human beings, but they will be of such a nature that no photograph could produce the same result." Not so far from Saint Thomas: "In the natural order we see the light of the Divine Intellect made visible to our bodily eyes. In the works of art the human intellect understanding, using and commenting as far as it participates in the Divine Light." Especially if we keep in mind the artist's work.

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"Paint and Prejudice" was written to answer attacks that have been made on Nevison's life and ideas. The book is amusing, enjoyable and humble. I can see, however, that some will not think the artist humble. Yet, only the humble readily acknowledge their debt to others for inspiration and mental growth.

It is a pity that one with Nevison's capacity for clear sight should say: "My objection to western religion is because of its promises of advantage in the next world rather than in this. I would like to see a good deed regarded as a gratification, as a self-indulgent release of emotion, not as an arduous task to be achieved with self-complacency." When the reward is a person and that Person the sole worthy object of a creature's complete love, the doing of good deeds becomes the selfless expression of objective love. A fact that any artist should be able to understand.

Because of its idealism in the cause of human intellect and social honesty one would like to commend the reading of this book to a certain class of Catholics who, because they happen to be baptized, are convinced that all is well with the world and that they may use methods of the Big Business Vulgarian with impunity.

SISTER MARY OF THE COMPASSION.

One Hundred Poems from the Palatine Anthology, in English paraphrase, by Dudley Fitts. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions. $2.50.

THE TRANSLATION is often deft but the humorous epigrams are more successfully handled than the serious. These free verse versions suggest neither the perfection of form nor the noble, haunting sadness of the famous epitaphs. E. R.

FICTION

The Yearling, by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

GROWING UP and learning about life can be a painful and beautiful thing for any boy of twelve years. To Jody Baxter, living in the 1870's in the wild hammock country near Lake George in Florida, these lessons are taught not from books, but by Nature which can be both cruel and friendly, and by man who can be equally cruel and friendly in his dealings with other men and the animals of Nature. In her new novel, "The Yearling," Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings tells of the events of one year, from April to April, in the lives of the Baxter family, and she stresses those experiences that force Jody to grow out of his boyhood.

If the reader can survive the many "fragile clusters of lavender bloom," "white tufted sky," "pale green earth," "golden sunlight," and finally an "arched rainbow" of the first chapter, he has a real treat in store for him, for Mrs. Rawlings writes with a sincere and unusual beauty. Her Cracker dialect is interesting and never becomes tiresome; her characterization is excellent; and her leisurely method of unfolding her plot fascinates the reader to the end of the book. The story is exciting, when Pa Baxter with Jody is hunting Slewfoot, the great bear, or when Pa is bitten by a rattler; terrifying, when the storm sweeps for eight days over the Baxter clearing; almost too real, when one suffers with the family through hardship, hunger and loss of crops; poignant and tragic, when Fodder-wing, the crippled brother of the wild and lawless neighbors, dies and when Jody must shoot Flag, his most beloved possession, his tame fawn; but at all times it is readable. "The Yearling" deserves to be popular with those readers who like novels of the backwoods and stories about those tender days of growth from boyhood.

PHILIP HARTUNG.

HISTORY

The Gateway to the Middle Ages, by Eleanor Shipley Duckett. New York: The Macmillan Company. $5.00.

THE SIXTH century was an age of despair and an age of hope. The old order was perishing. The new Christian order was struggling to be born. The Roman Empire in the West had passed into barbarian hands. In Italy the savage conflict between Romans and Goths brought famine and disease in its train and while rival armies thundered at the gates of Italian towns, people in city and country perished. The barbarian Franks in Gaul cared even less for the graces of literature than did the Goths in Italy. With the possible exception of the writings of Gildas, there are no authentic chronicles of the Saxon conquest of Britain. Roman and Celtic monasticism were established and fostered in this calamitous epoch, however, and while even many Christians believed that the end of the world was near at hand, patient and persevering scholars and monks, aided and encouraged by the Papacy, laid the groundwork for the building of a new civilization.

Summarizing the historical background, Miss Duckett gives a splendid critical analysis of the more important writings of this chaotic period: the "Letters" of the indefatigable Cassiodorus, sincere patriot and lover of Rome; the philosophical works of Boethius, which preserved the tradition of Aristotle in the Dark Ages before the revival of learning in the twelfth century; the "History" of Gregory, Bishop of Tours, which gives us such a vivid picture of the Merovingian age in Gaul; the poetry of Venantius Fortunatus. Truly has it been said that almost everything that is common to the Middle Ages, and much that lasts beyond the Renaissance, is to be found in the authors of the sixth century.

More extensive treatment is given to the establishment and spread of monasticism in the West as exemplified by the Rules of Columban, Caesarius and Cassiodorus, ultimately supplanted by the glorious Rule of St. Benedict, and by the apostolic labors of a host of Irish missionaries.

The book, intended for the general reader, is the fruit of two years of research and a ripe scholarship. It gives an accurate and stimulating picture of the period; but the last chapter is unfortunately marred by the assertion that Pope St. Gregory's eager credence in miracles paved the road to the superstition and easy credulity in the medieval Church.

JOHN J. O'CONNOR.

MEMOIRS

Fifty Years a Country Doctor, by William N. Macartney, M.D. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.50.

THEY were men, that generation of country doctors. With no more than a dash of education but with a real training in the rough-and-tumble of medicine at Cook County or Bellevue they were set to face disease and accident alone and unafraid. Dr. Macartney began to study medicine in 1888. His three years in a drug store by day, and gunsmithing, taxidermy and sign-painting by night, netted him only $700. So at the end of his first year in medical school he paid the matriculation fee for the second year and went back to the drug store to

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earn some more money. When he returned for the third year he had been so little missed that he graduated third in a class of two hundred; then on to Bellevue.

Back home, up in New York State, he has remained the rugged pioneer, breathing the independence of life in the open and incurably critical of the city and its "specialettes." Yet it is evident he has kept up his reading as well as the next man and knows when he needs a consultant. And when he cannot have one he is ready with his wits. He stands the test of modernity by recognizing "c.c." as a measure of volume, not as a pill.

His book is part biography but chiefly a summary of what he has found useful in his daily practice. Indeed the index makes it almost a handbook of household medicine, a gift for the lad who has just graduated from hospital and is bravely off to fight death alone in the country. It is crammed with the sayings of Uncle Eph, Doc Jenkins and the habitants across the great river, so cheerfully told it matters not at all that many of them are borrowed from the World's Best Literature. His bedside triumphs, such as tying the wounded and spurting carotid unaided, have a slightly piscatorial quality, and the specialist will shudder to read the concluding words, "I got a primary union throughout."

As chatty, gallant, defiant a book as you will meet. And at the end: "Here I shall dress my fish, watch the sun, God's sun, setting in the west over the reed-beds, the great blue herons crossing the sky to their rookeries beyond the wild cranberry marshes. . . ."

EDWARD L. KEYES.

Dancer in Madrid, by Janet Riesenfeld. With drawings by Lyle Justis. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. $2.50. *Hotel in Spain, by Nancy J. Johnstone. New York: Longmans, Green and Company.* $2.50.

HERE is war in miniature and from a supremely personal angle. Both authors, American and English, suddenly found themselves in the midst of the Spanish Civil War, both were naturally inclined to the radical point of view and both now write with conviction for the Loyalists.

Janet Riesenfeld is the daughter of Hugo Riesenfeld, Austrian impresario and former director of the Rialto and Rivoli Theatres. As a dancer in Hollywood, Janet fell in love at fifteen with a Catalan who had won a film contest. They swore eternal fidelity but when they met five years later in Mexico, Janet was negotiating a divorce from an American. An opportune dance contract enabled her, however, to follow the handsome Jaime to Spain which she reached as the Civil War started. Fluent Spanish and persistence got her across the closed border at Perpignan and once in Madrid she became an enthusiast for the Government. True people had a disconcerting way of disappearing only to be found later on in the Morgue, but Janet got used to being waked in the morning by the shots of the execution squad and she pictures vividly the stoicism of the Madrilenos during the air raids when Franco was so near that the last stop of the subway was within his lines.

Mrs. Johnstone writes with more humor and much more coherence but also has a way of cataloguing cities by the merits of their cafés or, as the English have it, "Pubs." Tossa, on the Costa Brava of Catalonia, where the Johnstones invested a legacy in building a hotel for English visitors, offered sufficient bars and beaches to satisfy even their journalist friends from Fleet Street,

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and such was the Johnstones' genius for publicity that their hotel was booked up for a year in advance. Their prize folder had on its cover, "DO YOU LIKE bowler hats—Olde Englishe Shoppes—organized amusement—tapioca?" The guests who came—did not.

The Johnstones loved their hotel and found the Catalans exceedingly kind neighbors and gay companions for their guests in the bars. They all accepted the war with philosophy. In January the entire community celebrated the fiesta of San Sebastian with a candlelit procession; a few months later they looked on unprotestingly as the Government officials arrested the priest, closed the church and ordered a bonfire made of statues and vestments. The priest, according to Mrs. Johnstone, is now living in contented retirement, as are the Johnstones in their hotel with young Leonard, their miracle major domo.

Both authors move exclusively in Bohemia and both books are to be read for amusement and oblivion. Mrs. Johnstone's catalogue of guests is overlong. Miss Riesenfeld is naively heroic about her sacrifice of romance for the proletarian cause as Jaime turned out to be pro-Franco. He had brought about his fiancée's arrest by persuading her to shelter one of his associates. But Janet left Jaime in the Morgue. EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

On My Own, by Mary Knight. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

THIS is the story of a Southern girl who became a successful newspaper reporter, covering a wide range of assignments, both in the United States and abroad. Faced with the necessity of earning her own living, she entered journalism more or less by accident. Her love of adventure and her ability as a reporter have carried her far, and she has crowded into a few years a lifetime of thrills. It is both an engaging and inspiring book, for the author has demonstrated that a woman can hold her own with the ablest foreign correspondents. She conveys to the reader the glamor of newspaper life: interviews with notables, close contact with history in the making, a quick dash to where big news is breaking.

Miss Knight's initial assignment was that of fashion writer, doing a short "Paris Styles" story every day. Man's work, however, soon awaited her. She helped cover the crash of the British airship R-101, the largest airship in the world; she interviewed Mahatma Gandhi, as he sat cross-legged on the floor of a Paris apartment; in man's clothes, she reported a guillotining; and she interviewed members of the exiled Spanish royal family.

In 1935, she embarked on a Norwegian freighter for Singapore and Hongkong. Her newspaper experiences in the Far East match in interest her European experiences. She interviewed famous war lords of South China, and studied, at first hand, the unfolding of the Far Eastern drama.

Back in the United States, again on a full-time job with the U. P., she showed her versatility as a reporter by interviewing Hollywood stars, by traveling as a hostess on a transcontinental airplane, and by taking her place as nurse at the Bellevue Hospital, the world's largest charity hospital. In these, and other assignments, she obtained the material for "human interest" stories of wide appeal.

In Miss Knight's account of her experiences as a newspaper reporter, it has again been demonstrated that fact can be as interesting as fiction. The narrative never lags. Her book reveals the reporter's life in its most exciting aspects. OLIVER MC KEE, JR.

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The Inner Forum

ON EASTER SUNDAY, April 17, the Holy Father canonized three new saints. To most Americans the lives of these three men are entirely unknown. Saint Andrew Bobóla was born in 1591 in Koprzynica, lesser Poland, of a senatorial family. He entered the Jesuit novitiate of the Province of Lithuania (Vilna) in 1611, where his influence on his fellow students soon drew the attention of his superiors. In 1622 he was ordained. Fourteen years later he began to work in the Lithuanian Mission, where he continued his labors with great success until, in 1657, he was captured by the Cossacks, who were laying waste the fields of his apostolate. After tortures of the most revolting sort, Father Bobóla died. His beatification took place in 1853.

Saint John Leonardi was born in 1541 at Diecimo in the Republic of Lucca, Italy. At the age of seventeen he began to learn the apothecary's trade, but his vocation to the priesthood finally triumphed over his economic difficulties, and in 1572 he was ordained. Two years later he was joined by several young laymen who wished to assist in the works of reform he had set himself, and community life began. The government of Lucca was never friendly, but in 1583 Saint John's congregation was canonically erected and it was confirmed in 1595. Before his death in 1609, John Leonardi reformed the monks of the Order of Monte Vergine and the Vallombrosans. In 1621 his congregation became a religious order, the Clerks Regular of the Mother of God of Lucca.

Salvator da Horta was born in Santa Colomba, near Gerona, Catalonia, in 1520. His parents died while he was yet young. At first he earned his living as a shepherd, then went to Barcelona, where he became a shoemaker. In 1540 he entered the Franciscan Convent of Santa Maria in Barcelona, where he acted as assistant to the cook. After his profession he was transferred to another house of his order and began to work miraculous cures. The remainder of his life was characterized by a succession of these cures, which did not cease even with his death in 1567 at Cagliari, Sardinia. Saint Salvator was beatified by Clement XI in 1711.

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